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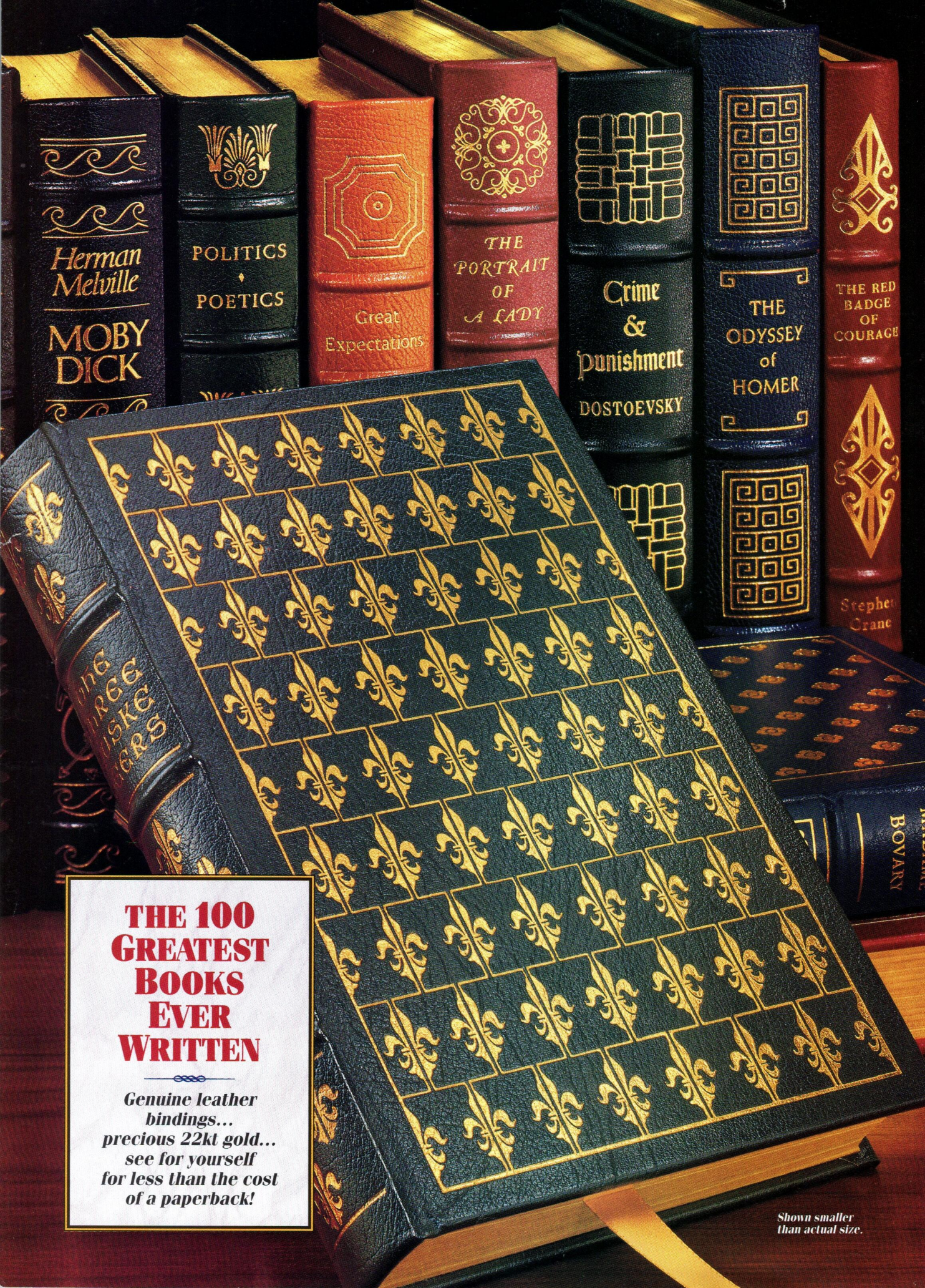
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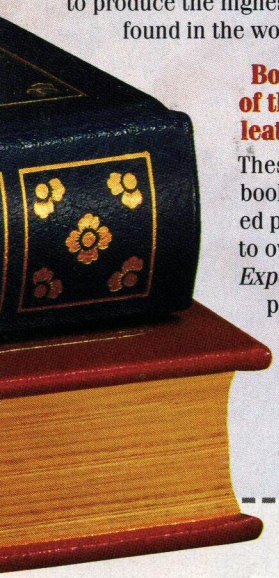
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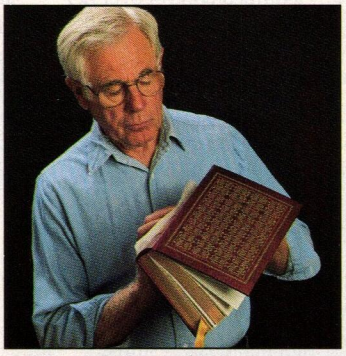
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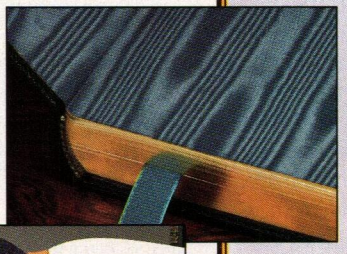
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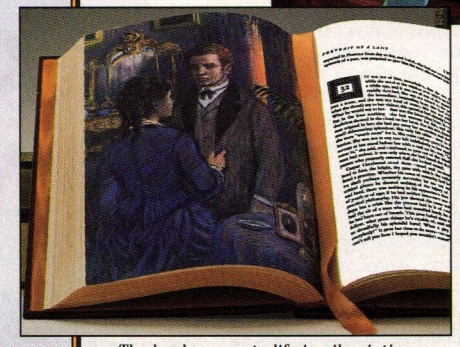
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"I DISAGREE"

I enjoyed Ivan Musicant's article on the subject of "Intervention" in the January/February 1995 issue of your magazine. It contains details passed over in general histories [and manages] to make at least some of the interventions as examples of less callous imperialism than had been understood previously. However, your author was more than a little specious in describing the cause of the Grenada operation of 1983.

Don't forget the context in which the Grenada action occurred: the Cold War, which some liberal ideologues would have preferred not to have been a consideration of policy makers of the time. There had been a coup by a far-left group in Grenada, and Soviet-supported Cuban elements were busy building a major military airfield that was not needed for civilian or justifiable military use. A casual look at a map of the Caribbean region would reveal an interesting triangular pattern that an airfield in the eastern Caribbean would have created, with the apex of two of the angles being Soviet-oriented Cuba and Nicaragua, and the third being Grenada. If the Reagan "patently false excuse" of protecting U.S. medical students was "comic," as your author phrased it, to those who followed more than media headlines, it was clear that there were other more basic reasons for the operation.

One doesn't have to agree with the Grenada invasion to give recognition to the realities leading to the operation. It is almost too recent history for the sort of comment your author saw appropriate for this article; it distorts what happened, and why.

Scott Breckinridge
Lexington, Kentucky

Author Ivan Musicant Replies:

Mr. Breckinridge's comments regarding the lack of political context for the 1983 American invasion of Grenada are well taken. Yes, a thuggish, Marxist government had taken control and threatened regional stability; and yes, a Cuban-Soviet military airfield was nearing completion. These reasons could well trigger an American military response, and I have no argument with that. The letter writer must, however, understand that the article in which Grenada appeared is drawn from the research for my 470-page book, *The Banana Wars*, in which Grenada occupies no more than a blip in history. Space restrictions in this magazine permitted only the most basic information for such a minor event.

That said, it was inexcusable for the Reagan administration and its partisans to claim the Grenada invasion was necessary for the safety of the medical students; it was not. It is of a piece with the canard used by "liberal ideologues," the writer's term, who claim American interventions in Latin America were primarily, if not entirely, economically motivated. Both positions are groundless nonsense.

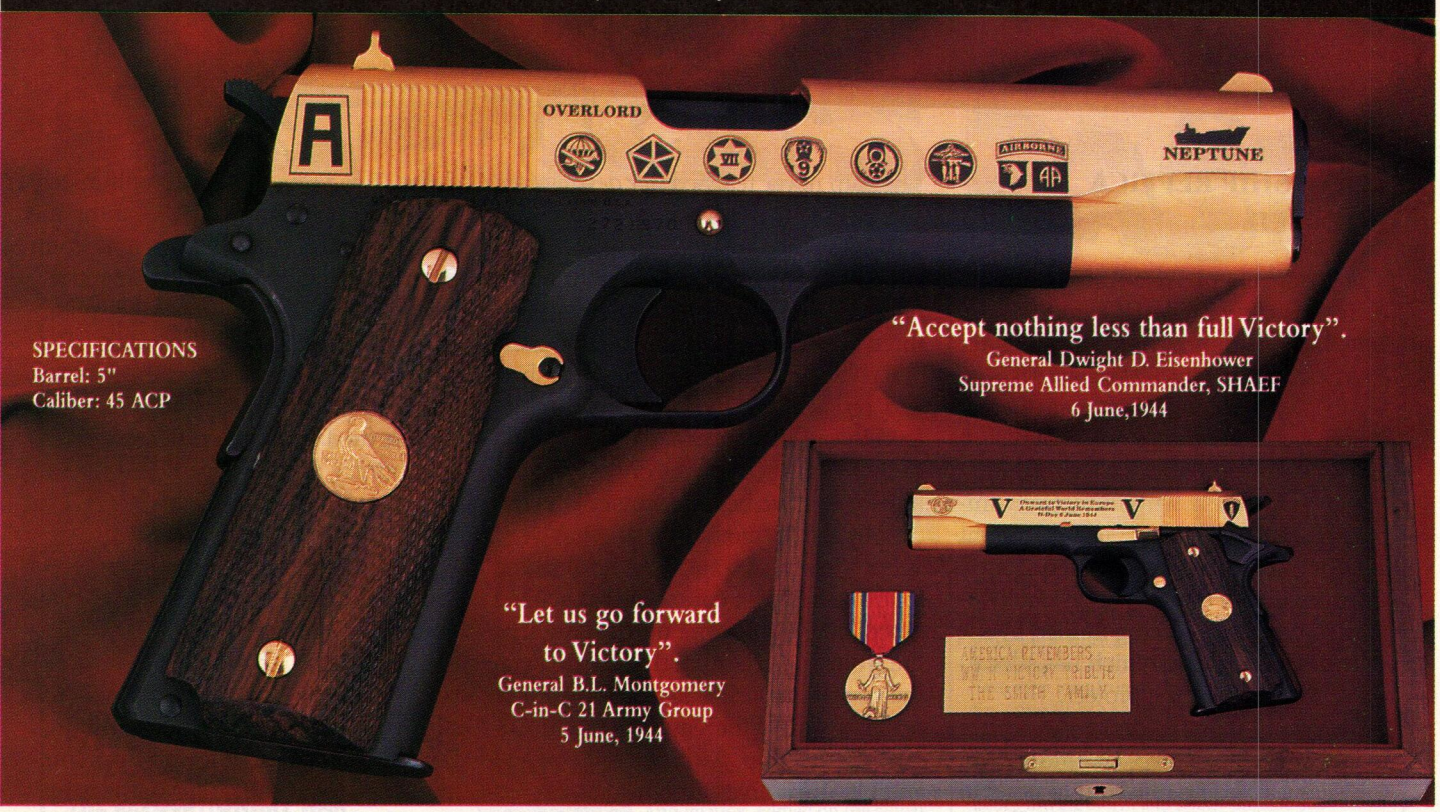
Had the Reagan administration been truthful in its political aims, and kept a disciplined hand on its service chiefs, it would not have wrought the absurd mushrooming of American forces and duality of mission—save the students, sweep away the Communists—that led to the minor military fiasco the invasion became.

Mr. Breckinridge should also know of the domestic political link binding the disaster at the Marine barracks in Beirut with the Grenada invasion. Had any onus for the October 23, 1983 bombing that killed 241 Marines fallen on the Reagan administration, the Grenada invasion in all likelihood would have been called off. The administration could not chance the political fallout from another questionable foreign deployment. But, as it was, virtually no opprobrium fell to the administration, and planning for the October 25 Grenada invasion continued.

The editors welcome comments from our readers. We endeavor to publish a representative sampling of correspondence; we regret, however, that limited space prevents us from printing every letter. Address correspondence to "Mailbox," American History, Box 8200, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105. ★

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In Nashville, the **Tennessee Botanical Garden and Museum of Art, Inc. at Cheekwood** (615-356-800) hosts through April 30 the American Architectural Foundation's (AAF) commemoration of the Biltmore's centennial—**The Most Distinguished Private Place: Creating the Biltmore Estate**. This exhibit, organized by the Octagon Museum in Washington, D.C., features more than 150 objects that celebrate the design and development of what landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted called "the most distinguished private place." The architectural drawings and sketches shown were culled from a collection of more than four hundred such pieces generated by Biltmore architect Richard Morris Hunt and his office. Also displayed are topographical maps, historical photographs, and decorative arts drawn from the estate's collection of more than fifty thousand pieces. The show will travel to Montgomery, Alabama and Columbia, South Carolina.

Grandson of shipping and railroad magnate Commodore Cornelius Vanderbilt (1794-1877) and heir to part of one of the nation's largest fortunes, George Washington Vanderbilt (1862-1914) wanted a country estate that would rival the great manor houses of Europe and embody the finest in architectural and interior design. An avid traveler and collector, Vanderbilt envisioned his house as a showcase for his priceless assortment of artworks, books, furniture, and textiles and as a retreat where he could entertain guests. The 255-room French Renaissance-style château, designed by Hunt and crafted by an army of stonecutters and artisans, accommodates thirty-four bedrooms, forty-three bathrooms, countless sitting rooms, sixty-five fireplaces, and an indoor swimming pool. A masterwork of design that bespeaks the essence of the Gilded Age, Biltmore was also conceived as a marvel of modern technology and amenity, with such then-rare luxuries as central heat, electricity, fire alarms, indoor plumbing, elevators, and refrigerators.

Vanderbilt commissioned Olmsted to transform the over-farmed, over-logged 125,000 acres of land surrounding the house into a country estate. Working closely with his employer and Hunt to achieve harmony between land and architecture, Olmsted planned woodlands, fields, and both informal and formal gardens, many of which can be seen today on the 8,000 acres that are still part of the estate. (Following Vanderbilt's 1914 death, 100,000 acres were acquired by the U.S. government to create the Pisgah National Forest.)



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LC79-7284 New York, 1956

Gurney, Gene, editor
TEST PILOTS
This anthology of works about the dramatic lives of test pilots begins with Orville Wright describing how he and his brother made the first flight, and ends with the first space flights. Also included are: accounts of Jimmy Doolittle's early blind-flying experiments; Roscoe Turner and Jacqueline Cochran on air racing; and the testing of the early B-17s, Messerschmitts, the 707 and the X-series rocket ships.
LC79-7265 Illus. New York, 1962
ISBN 0-405-12175-X $25.50

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Amelia Earhart's Birthplace, Atchison, Kansas (913-367-4217). This stately two-story Victorian home where the world's most famous female pilot was born in 1897 is now owned by the Ninety-Nines, Inc., an international organization of women pilots founded by Earhart with ninety-eight others.

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Maria Mitchell Home, Nantucket, Massachusetts (508-228-9198). As a child, the nation's first female astronomer, born in this house in 1818, accompanied her father on his rooftop astronomical studies and grew up to discover a comet of her own.

Willa Cather Home and the **Willa Cather Historical Center**, Red Cloud, Nebraska (402-746-3285). Although Cather spent only six years (1884-90) in Red Cloud as a child, this town and its surrounding countryside was the setting for most of her stories and novels.

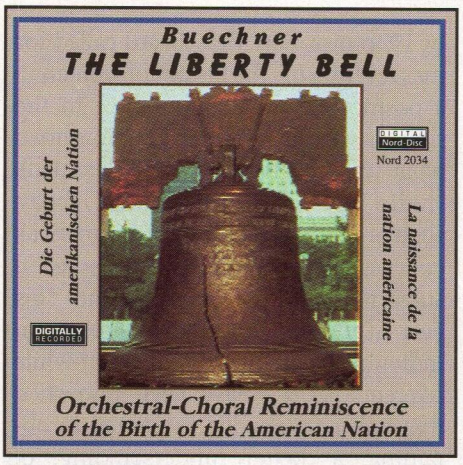
Alice Austen Museum, Staten Island, New York (718-816-4506). Talented amateur photographer Austen, whose images captured the manners and morals of the Victorian age, was born in this charming Victorian cottage in 1866 and spent most of her life here.

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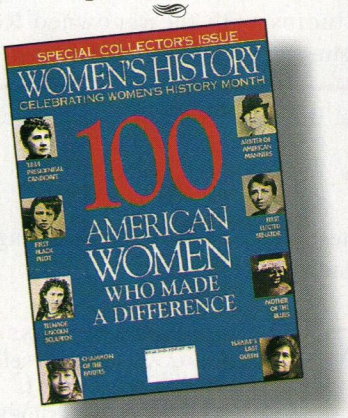
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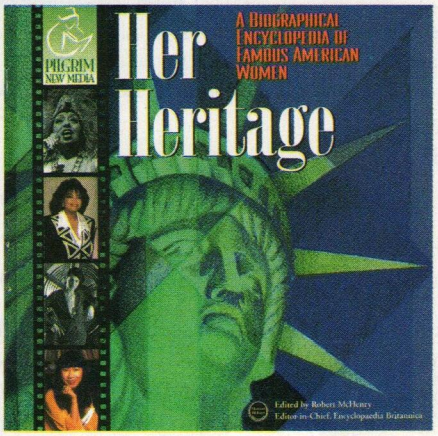
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WOMEN IN HISTORY

In 1936 historian Mary Beard called for the elevation of "the history of women to a position of equal importance in the schools with that of men" and outlined what was, in effect, the first "women's studies" program in education. Today, such programs are common at America's colleges and universities, and books on subjects relating to women abound. This year, in addition to many biographies on individual women, several worthwhile reference works have been published that will help anyone interested in obtaining a better understanding of women's place in the history of the United States and within a world context.

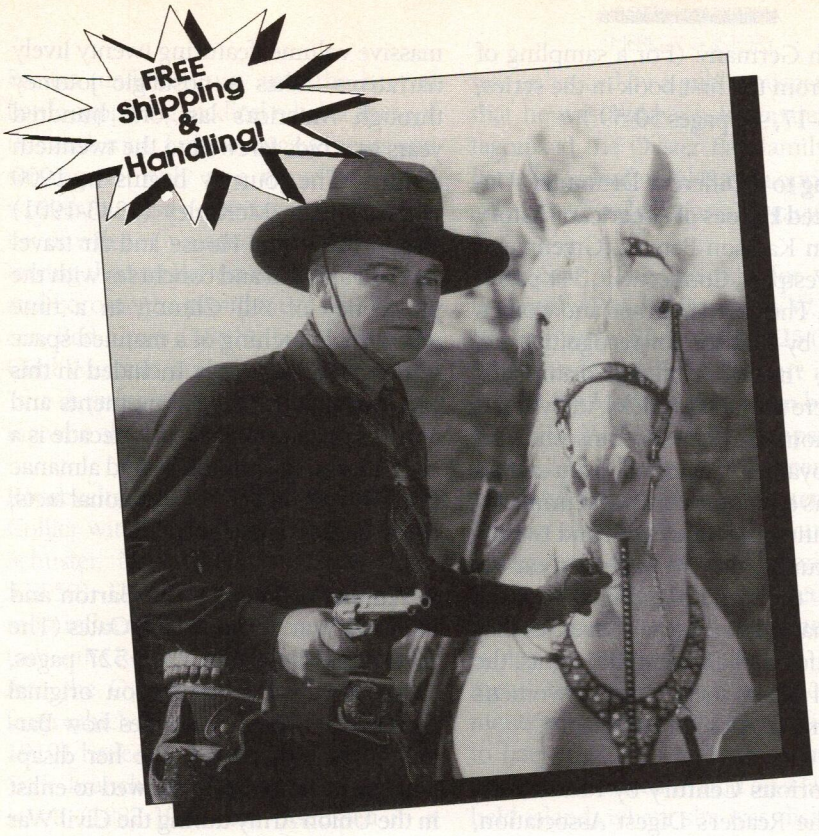
Chronology of Women's History by Kirstin Olsen (Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut and London, 506 pages, $39.95) and **The Women's Chronology: A Year-by-Year Record, from Prehistory to the Present** by James Trager (Henry Holt and Company, New York City, 787 pages, $40.00) trace the status of women, their personal achievements and failures, and their progress along the road to equality. Both chronicles, which start with pre-history and run through 1993, contain a wealth of facts. Olsen organizes her information chronologically within ten categories and provides more coverage of worldwide events than Trager, who offers more detail on some topics and uses a strictly chronological approach, labeling the entries with symbols that denote twenty-nine areas of human endeavor.



American Women's History: An A to Z of People, Organizations, Issues, and Events by Doris Weatherford (Prentice Hall General Reference, New York City, 396 pages, paper, $18.00) contains seven hundred alphabetical entries on individuals, organizations, events, and subject areas relating to American women. Weatherford's aim, she states, is "to provide some of the substance to fill in the background of [the] larger picture of American History." De-emphasizing "firsts," Weatherford also "excludes literally hundreds of entertainers, poets, and others in gender-stereotyped occupations to make room for women whose nontraditional achievements are overlooked."

Television newswoman Lynn Sherr and writer Jurate Kazickas have collaborated on **Susan B. Anthony Slept Here: A Guide to American Women's Landmarks** (Times Books, Random House, New York City, 580 pages, paper, $18.00), "a book about places, and the individual woman who have been shaped by, or who helped to transform, those places." The title, using a turn of phrase usually associated with George Washington, pays tribute to the fact that Anthony, a tireless worker for woman suffrage, traveled for the cause to several states, with overnight stays in six. Greatly expanding on their 1976 *The American Woman's Gazetteer*, the authors provide a state-by-state travel guide to about two thousand landmarks associated with woman both well-known and obscure.

For those with access to CD-Rom on Windows or Macintosh computers, **Her Heritage: a Biographical Encyclopedia of Famous American Women** (Pilgrim New Media, Cambridge, Massachusetts, $49.95) explores the lives of more than a thousand noteworthy women through text, hundreds of photographs, and dozens of film clips that allow the user to witness such bits of history as Annie



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THREE WHO ESCAPED

For the Nguyen Family, the most unforgetable and uncertain hours of their lives began on the evening of April 29, 1975. Lu Nguyen, then a first lieutenant in the South Vietnamese Marines, was stationed at Vung Tau, a coastal city about three hours' travel east of Saigon.

Nguyen and his wife Tuoi need only two words to describe April 29—frantic fear. "People ran wildly around. Nobody knew where they were going," recalls Tuoi. "They knew that the lines [between North and South Vietnam] had fallen, and they just wanted to get away. The sound of the exploding shells was so close that you thought your head would fly off."

Anticipating the worst, Lieutenant Nguyen sent two of his Marines to escort his wife and four-year-old daughter My Tuyet onto a small boat docked at the shore while he remained behind to fight. The boat, crammed full of people, soon got underway without a destination in mind, and after circling around endlessly, became lost. During the night it came upon an American ship, but that vessel was already so crowded with refugees that the crew fired shots to prevent the newcomers from boarding.

Not knowing what else to do, the boat's crew eventually anchored offshore. The situation grew uncomfortable, for in their rush to escape the refugees had brought little food or water. My Tuyet [who twenty years later conducted this interview with her parents] recalls being really hungry and having an aching back from having to sit up all night.

Finally, late on the afternoon of the 30th the little boat chanced upon a much larger Vietnamese civilian vessel, the *Tan Nam Viet*, and the refugees were allowed to board.

Lieutenant Nguyen, meanwhile, was taking part in the final defense of Vung Tau. At one point he told his radioman to remove his radio pack so that he could flee more quickly. But at that moment, while the soldier's hands were lifted, shrapnel flew by and sliced off his hand at the wrist.

Nguyen, who had known for some time that all was inevitably lost (because food and ammunition supplies were gone), radioed to the 150 men under his command to retreat to the shoreline. He then took the wounded man to headquarters for medical attention before heading for the shore himself. There he and many others swam about a mile out to sea, where Nguyen clung to an innertube while waiting for the shooting to subside and for a chance to escape.

After about three hours, a small Vietnamese naval vessel stopped nearby, and the hundreds of swimmers began to climb on board. Weighed down by so much humanity, the craft started to sink. Nguyen then swam over to a nearby oil barge and spent the night there.

On April 30, the barge's captain received word of South Vietnam's surrender. He decided to put to sea, and he radioed for help. As chance would have it, the ship that responded was the *Tan Nam Viet*—the same vessel that had picked up Nguyen's wife and daughter!

Reunited, the Nguyens were evacuated to a refugee camp in Guam for six weeks, then to another in Little Rock, Arkansas. A Lutheran Church in Pennsylvania offered to sponsor them, and the family moved to that state, where they continue to reside today. ★

drawn from the South, the United States could hardly jump back in, and no matter how it might intervene, it would be unable to save the Saigon administration from collapse.'"

The battle of Phuoc Long confirmed Le Duan's assessment. "All the conferees analyzed the enemy's weakness which in itself heralded a new opportunity for us," said General Dung in his account of the Politburo meeting that followed the battle. "To fully exploit this great opportunity we had to conduct large-scale annihilating battles to destroy and disintegrate the enemy on a large scale." Encouraged not only by the battle but by the U.S. reaction, the final NVA offensive was set in motion. Two months later three NVA divisions descended on Ban Me Thuot.

Casting aside security guarantees that it had made two years earlier, the United States limited its response to the NVA's blatant violation (and it was deliberately meant to be blatant in order to test the U.S. resolve) of the Paris Accords to an official diplomatic protest. And in a press conference on January 21, 1975, President Gerald Ford said he could foresee no circumstances in which the U.S. might actively reenter the Vietnam War.

It was now obvious to South Vietnam President Thieu that he was on his own. On March 14, 1975, as the battle for Ban Me Thuot drew to a close, he held a meeting at Cam Ranh Bay with Major General Pham Van Phu, the commander of Military Region II. Phu was ordered to withdraw his forces from Kontum and Pleiku in the Central Highlands to provide additional forces for the retaking of Ban Me Thout. The evacuation began on March 15, 1975—a day that marked the beginning of the end for South Vietnam.

Poorly planned and even more poorly executed, the withdrawal quickly disintegrated into chaos. "Not foreseeing the inevitable mass civilian exodus that would accompany the military column

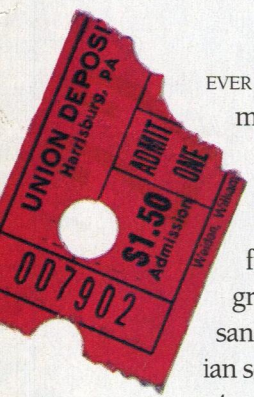
A South Vietnamese soldier assists his wounded comrade during heavy fighting just three miles from the heart of Saigon (opposite), as North Vietnamese forces tighten their grip on the capital on April 28, 1975. More than 230,000 troops of the Republic of Vietnam died during the decade-plus struggle against their Communist adversaries.

UPI/BETTMANN NEWSPHOTOS, NEW YORK CITY



A CAST OF THOUSANDS

BY DIANA SERRA CARY A FORMER ACTRESS EXPLORES THE HUMBLE, ANONYMOUS ROLE OF THOSE ESSENTIAL BUT UNSUNG LEGIONS OF THE SILVER SCREEN—THE HOLLYWOOD EXTRAS.



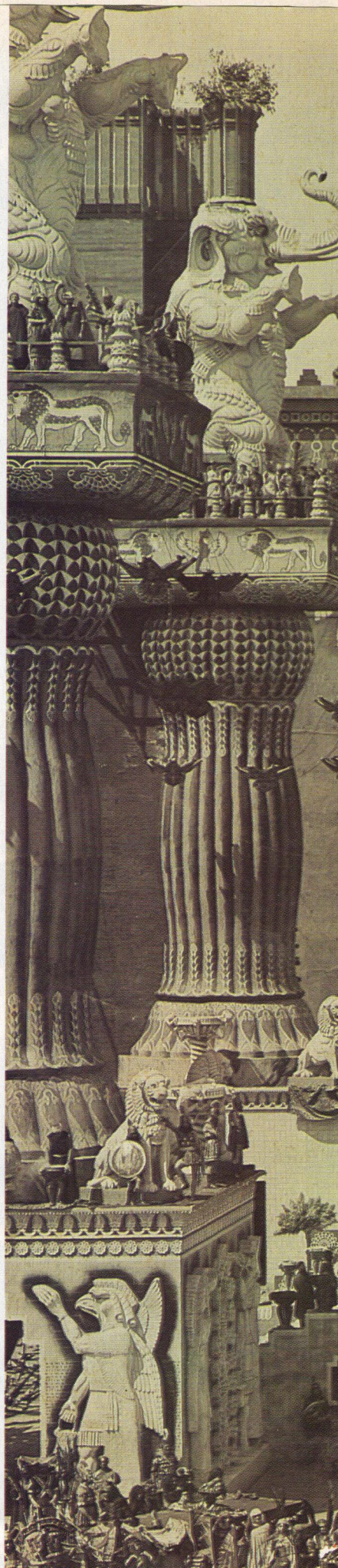
EVER SINCE the first Hollywood director yelled "Action!" on the set of a motion picture, the anonymous corps of performers known as "extras" formed an integral element of the film capital's working society. Populating virtually every production, these humble but essential "extra people," to use their formal title, ranged in numbers from the dozens of nameless characters who decorated the backgrounds of run-of-the-mill dramas to the legendary "casts of thousands" recruited for mammoth screen epics (the staggering Babylonian set at right is from an episode in D.W. Griffith's 1916 *Intolerance*).

A typical film of the 1920s or '30s included "atmosphere people" drawn from every walk of life: bored housewives, brazen waitresses, and flirty ribbon counter clerks worked side-by-side with stranded circus folk, aspiring stage actors, unemployed vaudevillians, and starry-eyed winners of down-home beauty pageants.

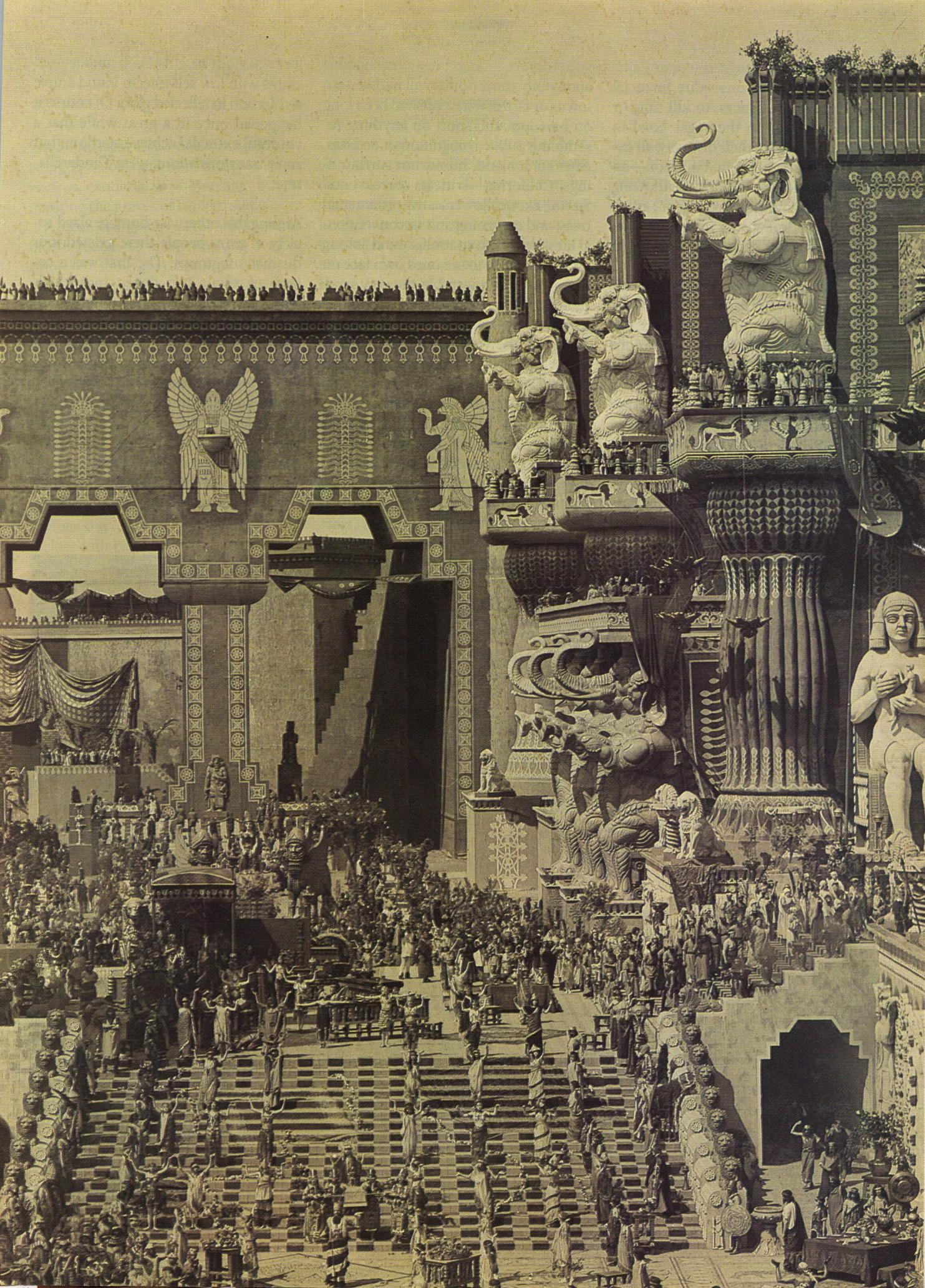
An early extra of considerable local renown, to cite one example, was spare and feisty "Miss Eunice," a sixty-five-year-old grandmother in search of herself. She had begun life as a Creole aristocrat in Louisiana, but the Civil War broke out when she was sixteen, and slaves burned down the family plantation. Like many other Rebels, Eunice had subsequently "gone to Texas," where she married, ran cattle, reared ten children, and put up with a drunken husband—all the time hating Texas soil so roundly that she beat the ground outside her back door every morning with a stick!

In 1919 Eunice ditched it all, took the Southern Pacific west, and started a new life in Hollywood, where she met and became the pet of two young gents with studio connections. They got her steady extra work and sent a stand-by car around to pick her up. Her French blood felt at home on the sets of *Joan of Arc*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and films about the antebellum South where Creole sweethearts waltzed and *no* plantations burned. When asked why she liked extra work, Eunice would sigh dreamily and say, "It's the life I was *born* to live!"

Like Miss Eunice, most Hollywood extras hailed from someplace else. Once



PHOTOFEST, NEW YORK CITY.



in California, they turned to extra jobs

AMERICAN HISTORY

sued this obsessive profession of notable

for such giddy heights. Such middle-aged

Five, and the ubiquitous Seven Weidlers who ranged from toddlers to teenagers, all of whom spent their entire childhoods as family breadwinners.

During the 1920s, pioneers Jackie Coogan and Baby Peggy were the two reigning child stars, each earning millions and enjoying worldwide fame. Envisioning bonanzas of equal magnitude, movie mothers flogged their fast-aging young in a desperate race against time. In 1934 that race escalated into a full-scale Gold Rush when Shirley Temple hit musical pay dirt, and every pint-sized contender storming Hollywood showed up wearing tap shoes.

The August 1926 issue of the *Standard Casting Directory*, for example, advertised some 240 movie children. Designed to win the hearts of casting directors, the tightly-worded caption under each photo was the painstaking work of some ferociously ambitious Mom. Lisping infants were described as "experienced troupers." Some mothers cited every film in which their child had played. Some included singing, dancing, and playing one or more musical instruments in these thumbnail résumés.

Each child's exact height and weight was duly listed, as though he or she was being sold by the inch and the pound. Under a picture of jaunty two-year-old, thirty-two-inch, twenty-nine-pound Jackie Combs, togged out in golf cap and plus fours, his don't-take-no-for-an-answer mother pitched an irresistible last-ditch option to *Directory* readers with her closing line, *"Try me as a girl!"*

Sadly, despite their parents' ambitions, most of these youngsters were limited by fate and talent to passing their childhoods doing extra work and a few bit parts.

Yet another gulf separated the ordinary extra from an elite group of performers whose exalted status grew out of the industry's own peculiar needs. When notifying extras by telephone of an upcoming job, casting people always explained whether they would be issued costumes by the studio or would work before the cameras in their own everyday garb. If the latter, they were told to show up wearing "Small-Town Street Clothes," meaning homespun, or "City Street Clothes." The latter meant well-tailored suits, Homburgs, spats, and Florsheims for men; fashionable gowns, pumps, handbags, gloves, and voguish hats with veils for women.

Most extras' closets were up to these modest demands, but when a studio needed richly-dressed patricians for a gathering of the social elite, or big-spending patrons to grace some art-deco nightclub, budget-wise producers were unwilling to provide mere extras with such costly contemporary costumes.



Forming a distinct subgroup within the world of extras were some two hundred displaced cowboys whose riding abilities and willingness to perform dangerous stunts were indispensible for historical and adventure movies as well as westerns. Five original members of this close-knit band were (left to right) Jack Montgomery (the author's father), former western star Neal Hart (reduced by the mid-1930s to extra work), John Carradine, "Buck" Bucko, and an unidentified companion. Most of Hollywood's contingent of "riding extras" were mustered for cavalry duty in Warner Bros.' 1936 film "The Charge of the Light Brigade" (opposite). Several were badly hurt—and more than a dozen horses killed—while re-creating the last ride of

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR.

Their solution was to create a new category of lavishly-clothed background people called "Dress Extras."

To qualify, one had to have the financial wherewithal to purchase an extensive, expensive wardrobe. Women required a dozen formal evening gowns and several fur wraps; men more than one tuxedo with tails, a top hat, and white tie. Both sexes also needed up-to-the-minute tennis, golf, and riding togs, snappy poolside shorts, sun dresses, and swimsuits. Essential for women was a collection of wide-brimmed "picture hats" to wear with flowered gowns to outdoor weddings and English garden parties. Natty blazers, slacks, and skirts did for a day at Ascot or Santa Anita and might even double for upper-crust voyagers playing deck games aboard a luxury liner.

Such a wardrobe represented a sizable initial expense and plenty of upkeep, but for those able to make the investment, the gamble paid off. While in the mid-1930s the average extra earned $7.50 a day, Dress Extras drew down a princely $16.50! And there were fringe benefits, too. An attractive young woman could profit by moonlighting. Always at hand on most dress sets was a wily gent with "bedroom eyes," known only as "Frenchy," who recruited beauteous Dress Extras (mostly new to film work), set up interviews with them at night in the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, and introduced the applicants to a lucrative part-time career. Exhibitors and small-town theater owners visiting Hollywood on business paid these lovelies $100 a night to decorate their arm as "gentlemen's escorts"—a Hollywood euphemism for what was known everywhere else as the "oldest profession." The shady ladies then gave Frenchy his ten-percent commission for acting as their "agent"—another euphemism for what others called a base, albeit time-honored trade.

Except for spending all day in the electrifying presence of one or more glamourous stars, most extra work was nearly as monotonous as being back on the farm. Scenes were forever being re-taken and extras made to go through the same simple actions repeatedly. Between such endless re-takes time dragged.

The stars and other principal actors sat out the delays in a charmed circle of directors' chairs near the camera, the actresses usually knitting or crocheting. Most male stars played cards with their peers, tried to make time with someone in their own circle, or prowled the entire set in search of carnal prey, which of course abounded.

Extras formed their own circle, at a discreet distance, out of earshot of their "betters," so as to safely rake over the



stars' private lives and often-scandalous escapades. Extra women also passed their time speculating about lucrative "long runs" on upcoming films, or quoting Louella Parsons' daily word as gospel. Male extras had their own off-camera ritual of pursuing good-looking extra women or chorus girls, treating those who were willing to a sensual neck and shoulder massage "to relax the tension," as they always said. This time-worn ploy was accompanied by a running patter of thinly-veiled innuendos. (If today's climate for sexual harassment suits had prevailed then, female extras and their lawyers would have made a killing!)

The biggest concern for every extra was landing a job in the first place. In Hollywood's earliest years, finding work was simply a case of knowing someone who knew someone at a studio. You reported to that official, gave the name of your friend, and were often hired on the spot.

From 1915 to at least the mid-1920s, cowboys waited in front of Universal in a "holding tank" surrounded by a wire fence. If a director on the lot needed riders or background gamblers in a saloon, he went to the tank and picked out his men. Other studios knew the clandestine whiskey-mill just off Hollywood Boulevard where "riding extras" played poker between jobs. A stand-by car driver was dispatched to hire a designated number and bring them to the studio.

But all this changed in 1932 when Bert Hampton, a former extra himself, set up "Central Casting" in an office building on the corner of Hollywood Boulevard and Western Avenue. By offering to contact extras instead of leaving the studios to do it themselves, Hampton got them to pay him a handsome salary, as well as the salaries of five full-time assistants and a corps of operators for the large manual switchboard. For decades Central Casting's board was the busiest in the Los Angeles area, its operators putting through some three thousand calls an hour and answering that many more. Soon an estimated eighteen thousand people were registered at Central as full-time extras.

Of course a "full-time extra" was a contradiction in terms. Although studios used extras lavishly in those days, rarely were there enough jobs to go around. Usually one worked for a few days—and then maybe not again for a couple of weeks. But with the advent of "Central," extras became chained to their telephones. Every weekday from three in the afternoon until seven, all eighteen thousand registered extras, (and only God knew how many more unregistered ones!) started dialing Central at three-minute intervals. It took



that kind of persistence to get through on those incredibly busy lines.

The sweetest words a job-hungry extra could hear from a Central operator were, "Be at Warner Bros. studio (or Fox, RKO, Paramount, or MGM) tomorrow morning by 8:00 A.M. Small-town street clothes. Rain or shine." (On "Weather Permitting" calls, if it rained the extras were sent home with only fifty cents carfare). When an operator answered with a succinct "Try later!" extras knew it was Central's shorthand for "No more jobs today".

Landing the job was one struggle; getting to the studio and on the set another. In those Depression years few extras had their own cars, but those who did gave rides to their wheelless friends. Otherwise one took a trolley or, if the call was for 5:00 A.M., a Yellow Cab. Once at the studio, (assuming it was a costume film), there was a mad footrace of perhaps a hundred extras up a flight of clanging iron stairs to the wardrobe and hairdressing departments. Skilled wardrobe people quickly fitted scores of extras in period dress, women in one huge room, men in another. The performers' street clothes were stored in numbered lockers and each extra given a key.

Then the mob made a second dash, this time to the hairdressing department—one section for women, a second for men. Here, facing a long mirrored counter, experts fitted the women and girls with braids, falls, curls, lovelocks, or full wigs. On the opposite side of the counter the men were set back in time by period mustaches, sideburns, goatees, or beards. The next wild rush downstairs demanded that women skillfully maneuver their cumbersome farthingales, bustles, or hoops. If it was a location job, there was another struggle to fit voluminous skirts into the studio buses. An assistant director signed vouchers for the performers as they boarded the bus and again at night when they returned to the studio. If an extra lost his voucher, he didn't get paid.

At the end of the day the extras repeated the clamorous climb upstairs, received assistance in removing their costumes and hairpieces, and retrieved their street clothes. The next stampede was downstairs to the cashier's window. In exchange for the extra's voucher, the cashier placed a five-dollar bill and two singles on the counter, then sent a fifty-cent piece or two quarters clanging noisily down a metal change chute. Assuming there was no call back for tomorrow, the extra's final challenge of the day was the race to be first to reach the only telephone booth just outside the studio gate to call Central Casting before every job for the next day was filled. It was a hectic, hassled, hand-to-mouth existence—



Hollywood childlren constituted another class of extras. Although their ambitious mothers had visions of stardom for their offspring, most never rose above extra and bit parts. On the opposite page, "stars in the making" pose behind baby "trainer" and producer Jack Hays, who holds an uncharacteristically disgruntled Shirley Temple.

Performers with the resources to furnish their own elegant wardrobes comprised an elite clique known as "Dress Extras." At right, more than two hundred Dress Extras await a banquet scene on the set of "Nothing Sacred," which starred Carole Lombard and Frederic March.

CULVER PICTURES (OPPOSITE) AND PHOTOFEST (RIGHT).

but for most of those involved an exciting one.

During those Depression years, while sharing the daily uncertainties and hardships with my fellow extras, I developed a great empathy for them. Although I personally disliked the work, I knew it formed their entire social world—workplace and club rolled into one. As a group, extras were generous to a fault. In Hollywood apartment houses, when our phone was cut off for lack of payment, other extras in the building let us call Central on theirs. If their gas was cut off for the same reason, they were invited to cook their meals on our stove.

During the 1930s, a new uncertainty threatened the Hollywood extras' livelihood. Thousands of German Jews, alarmed at Hitler's savage anti-Semitism, began fleeing their country. Countless refugees—old friends and close or distant relatives of successful movie executives—made a beeline for Los Angeles. There they threw themselves upon the mercy of their kinsmen and countrymen, begging to be given jobs in the industry.

This influx of Europeans included many brilliant actors, directors, set designers, artists, composers, and musicians, whose talents vastly enriched the movie colony. Non-professional and inexperienced young men were given entry-level jobs as "grips" and "gofers" somewhere on the lot. But that still left large numbers of refugees—most of whom did not speak a word of English—without work. What to do with them?

Overwhelmed, studio executives issued these desperate people "waivers," giving them blanket permission to work as extras at any studio without registering at Central. They found extra work in street crowds, as circus and theater audiences, and as spectators in courtroom sets. But their taking jobs from the "regulars" wrought financial hardship among rank-and-file extras and caused considerable resentment against the newcomers.

About this time the nascent Screen Actor's Guild was being organized. Every studio head had always been hostile toward any union that might infiltrate his own private fiefdom. But since the Guild was headed by actors with old scores to settle, the Trojan Horse was already inside the gate. The Guild not only brought about better working conditions for the stars, but won higher wages and workers' compensation for the extras, greatly improving their lives. (Until then, when a riding extra was killed in a fall, all that had stood between his widow and destitution were the ten- and twenty-dollar bills dropped into the satin-lined crown of a fellow

Photographs on the MGM lot during the 1938 filming of "Marie Antoinette" provide glimpses into the working life of extras. "Background people" are fitted for costumes and wigs in assembly-line fashion; get their pay vouchers stamped; wait outside the sound stage; and —finally—become part of the glittering world of make-believe in the presence of such stars as Norma Shearer and Tyrone Power (opposite).







MARC WANAMAKER, BISON ARCHIVES (LEFT); PHOTOFEST (OPPOSITE).

cowboy's dress Stetson after he "passed the hat" around the set.) But one day the wounded studios would seek and find appropriate revenge.

When Hitler launched his *Blitzkrieg* in 1939, a severe tremor rocked Hollywood extra ranks. Two or three large aircraft factories were set up nearby and advertised *steady* jobs in local newspapers. Hollywood had long been a one-industry town where almost everyone worked at something related to filmmaking. Except for oil, real estate, and tourism, there was not much else around.

Not surprisingly, men who had been eking out little more than a bare living as extras began flocking to the aircraft plants, and soon thereafter shipyards at San Pedro and Wilmington also offered full employment and high wages. After Pearl Harbor there was a grand exodus of male extras as they enlisted or were drafted into some branch of the service.

This gave the circle of women extras more serious matters to discuss than whom Lana Turner was dating. They scanned newspaper reports of gargantuan battles being fought on land and sea and read aloud letters from absent sons and husbands serving overseas. Middle-aged cowboys served the home front as block wardens, and the extra women distributed vital instructions to their neighbors on what to do in case of air raids or mustard-gas attacks.

At war's end, Hollywood actors returned home from overseas with a vastly changed perspective on life. Few male extras returned to the sets. Even stars such as Clark Gable and Tyrone Power told interviewers that movie-making seemed more trivial to them now. They had seen war's frightful visage and felt death's chill breath on their cheek. For them, making love to famous actresses in front of a camera and being mobbed by fans had lost appeal. Only the love of money remained.

During the late 1950s, after three decades as the indomitable Goliath of the entertainment world, the motion picture industry faced its David—television. But lifelong extras were not concerned. Thanks to the Screen Actor's Guild, their prospects had never seemed brighter. They no longer lined up at the cashier's window: studio checks were mailed to their homes. And, oh, the increase in pay! Regular extras now earned $24.26 a day, Dress Extras $31.94. On the set of *Elmer Gantry* they got $90 for working near a fire when the gospel tent burned. On *Spartacus* they wore asbestos slave costumes and earned $200 a day for letting burning logs roll over them.

continued on page 72



WOMAN OF IRON

IN 1810, when she was sixteen, Rebecca Pennock was a dreamy, romantic girl, fond of appreciating nature's picturesque beauty from the back of a horse and bounding "over hill and dale as wild, happy, and joyous as youth could make me." By 1840, however, Rebecca Pennock Lukens had become a businesswoman renowned for her shrewdness—an entrepreneur on the cusp of the Industrial Revolution in the United States and the owner of a thriving steel mill on the banks of Pennsylvania's Brandywine River.

Rebecca was born on January 6, 1794 to Martha and Isaac Pennock, whose family had been in Pennsylvania since the days of William Penn. Although Isaac had been deeded three hundred acres of farmland by his father in 1792, he saw opportunity in the iron business and wanted nothing to do with farming. Recognizing that the new United States, free from restrictions that had been imposed during the colonial era, would no longer have to buy industrial wares from Great Britain, he proceeded to establish an iron works known as the Federal Slitting Mill on Bucks Run some four miles from Coatesville.*

Another area resident, Jesse Kersey, was inspired by the opening of the Lancaster Turnpike to develop a community on land owned by his father-in-law, Moses Coates that would attract residents and industry. He formed a partnership with Isaac Pennock in 1810 and together they purchased 110 acres of Coates's land. Pennock converted a saw mill on the property into an iron works, calling it the Brandywine Iron Works and Nail Factory after the pleasant river that ran alongside it and provided the water power that kept the machinery humming. By 1817 Isaac had become the sole proprietor of the business.

As a child, Rebecca enjoyed considerable freedom, finding special pleasure in the company of three nearby older cousins, a boy and two girls. With them she roved the countryside, and from them she acquired her first taste of the joys of learning. At twelve she was sent to boarding school and then a year later to another institution, where, she later recalled, "life began to open new charms to me."

When she returned home at sixteen, Rebecca, as the oldest child, was called upon to help raise her six younger siblings, especially the baby. She took a liking to the infant, but missed her studies and garnered solace in solitary reading. Soon permitted to return to a school in Wilmington, Delaware, she demonstrated a characteristic mix of practicality and romance by excelling in chemistry and French.

When Rebecca met Dr. Charles Lloyd Lukens, he had a medical practice in Abington, Pennsylvania. At their first meeting, Rebecca wrote, he "bowed with a peculiar grace, and for a moment my eyes rested on his interesting face and his tall and commanding figure." She was smitten and never ceased to regard Dr. Lukens with anything but deep love. They were married in 1813.

Dr. Lukens gave up his medical practice and joined his new father-in-law's iron business. By around 1817—the same time that Isaac became the sole owner of the works—he leased the operation to Lukens, explaining to Rebecca that she would inherit the business when he died.* The former physician set about transforming himself into an iron-maker.

The United States was then entering an expansive, optimistic period. Although the country was already feeling the frictions that would later lead to civil war, its mood was progressive and forthright, as states west of the Alleghenies were ushered into the Union. Mills and factories sprouted as the young republic began developing its industrial muscle. An enterprising man could go far, and Lukens was well positioned.

This was the beginning of the Age of Steam. And, steam power requires boilers, which, in turn, require iron plate. In 1818, Lukens's mill became the first in the United States to roll iron boiler plate. Orders came in from steamboat manufacturers, and the Brandywine Iron Works became one of the world's most renowned makers of rolled iron and steel.

In late March 1825, Lukens received his most prestigious commission. John Elgar of York, Pennsylvania needed iron "of the best quality and sound" in order to build an iron-hulled steamboat to ply the Susquehanna River. Lukens iron fit the bill. The *Codorus*, the first steamer to operate on the river, was launched in November, but Lukens was not there to see it. That summer, he died at age thirty-nine, leaving Rebecca with two children and one more on the way.

Lukens's love for his wife, it seems, also included a keen appreciation of her talents. For it was his idea—and his dying request—that she carry on the business. For Rebecca, it was not only a time of grief, but a time of peril. The iron works was in debt and in need of repair. As well, her family was not happy about her running the firm. As she later put it, "necessity is a stern taskmistress; my every want gave me courage." Lukens's brother Solomon took over the supervision of the business's day-to-day affairs, but Rebecca was the sole manager and owner.

So far, most of Brandywine Iron Works' business was in the making of iron plate for ships, but only a year after Rebecca took over the firm, the first railway steam locomotive in the United States was run on a small track in Hoboken, New Jersey. Rebecca had the fore-

*A slitting mill was so named because it produced iron sheets that were then slit into strips to make such items as barrel hoops and wheel rims.

*Isaac Pennock died in 1824.

BY JOSEPH GUSTAITIS IN 1825 REBECCA LUKENS TOOK OVER HER LATE HUSBAND'S IRON MILL. THE COMPANY STILL THRIVES—A TESTAMENT TO THE MANAGEMENT ABILITIES OF THIS PIONEERING WOMAN CEO.



PAINTING COURTESY OF LUKENS, INC.

sight to see in the new railways—such as the Philadelphia & Columbia Railroad begun in the 1830s—opportunity for her business, and Brandywine started manufacturing iron for locomotives.

During the Panic of 1837—in reality a full-blown depression that plagued the country for six years—Rebecca refused to lay workers off, but instead set them to repairing the mill or working on her farm. When there was no cash, she paid them in produce. "The difficulties of the times throw a gloom on everything," she wrote. "All is paralyzed—business at a stand."

Rebecca survived, and by the mid-1840s she was able to think about stepping down. She had paid off all debts, solved the legal problems caused by her father's ambiguous will, and turned the business into the top boiler-plate company in the United States. Moreover, two of her daughters had married husbands who were well able to shoulder the firm's burdens. As she contemplated her achievements, she said, "I had built a very superior mill, though a plain one, and our character for making boiler iron stood first in the market, hence we had as much business as we could do. . . . There was difficulty and danger on every side. Now I look back and wonder at my daring."

On December 10, 1854, five years after she retired from managing the firm, Rebecca died. The company that she built—Lukens Steel—still thrives on the banks of the Brandywine River and is renowned for steel plate. Rebecca herself has not been forgotten. January 6, 1994—the bicentennial of her birth—was proclaimed "Rebecca Lukens Day" by the Pennsylvania State Senate. Three months later, she was inducted into the National Business Hall of Fame at a banquet in New York City. ★

New York writer Joseph Gustaitis is a frequent contributor to American History *magazine.*

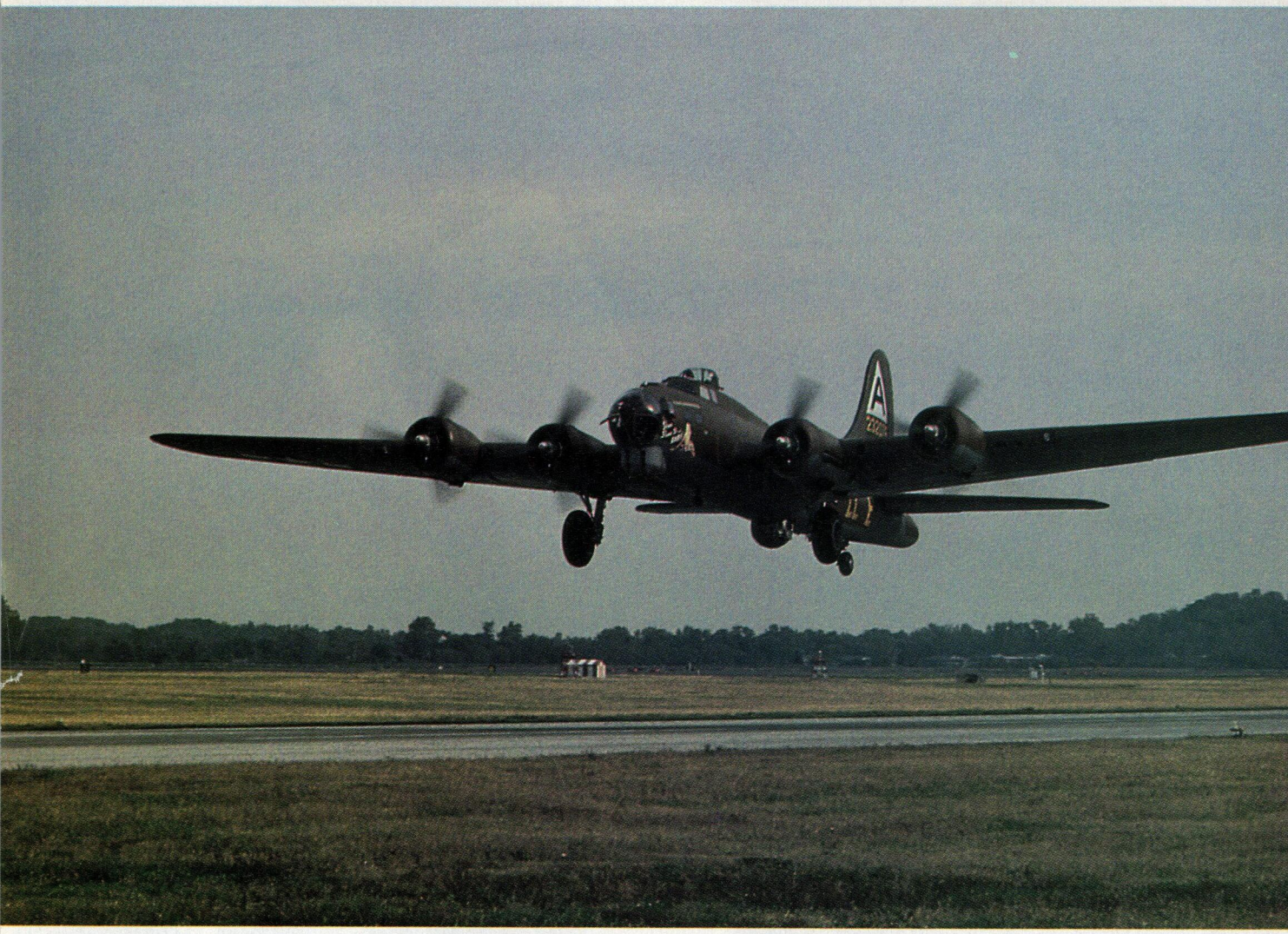
BOMBING MISSION



PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAN PATTERSON WITH TEXT BY PAUL PERKINS

MODERN IMAGES ABOARD METICULOUSLY RESTORED B-17 FLYING FORTRESSES CREATE WINDOWS OF MEMORY INTO THE WORLD-WAR-II PAST.





During 1942-45, a struggle of epic dimensions took place in the skies over Europe. Ninety-mile-long streams of bombers—American B-17s crammed with thousands of men—confronted the best aerial defenses of the time. In a fury of flak and fighter attacks, they hit their targets. Many crewmen lost their lives —but the costly effort significantly hastened Germany's defeat.

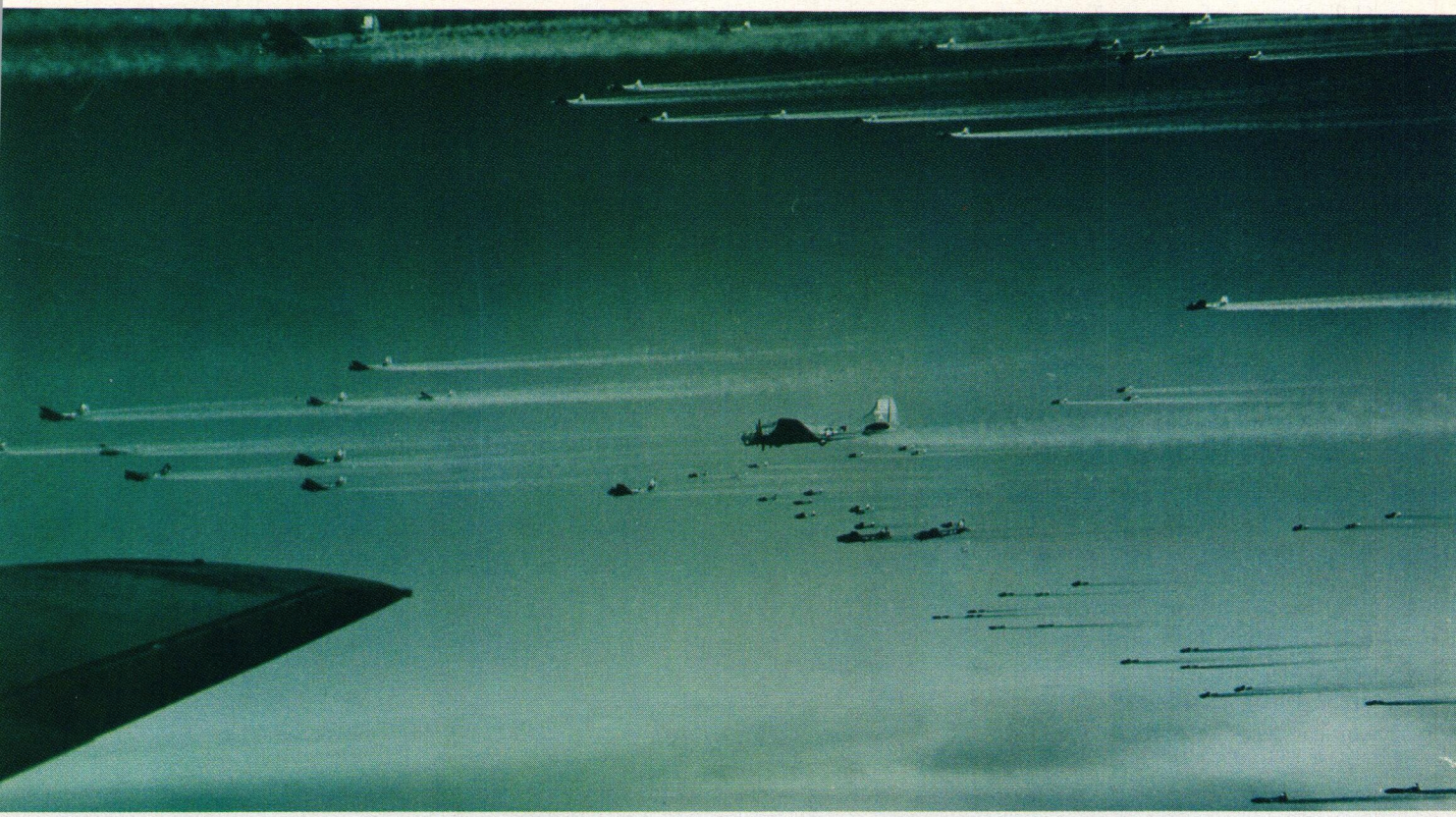
Today, of the more than twelve thousand B-17s built, only a handful of restored, flyable examples survive. Through the accompanying photographs made aboard such aircraft, Ohio photographer Dan Patterson has sought "to remove the clues of the present day and provide windows through time" into the world of those courageous U.S. aircrews .



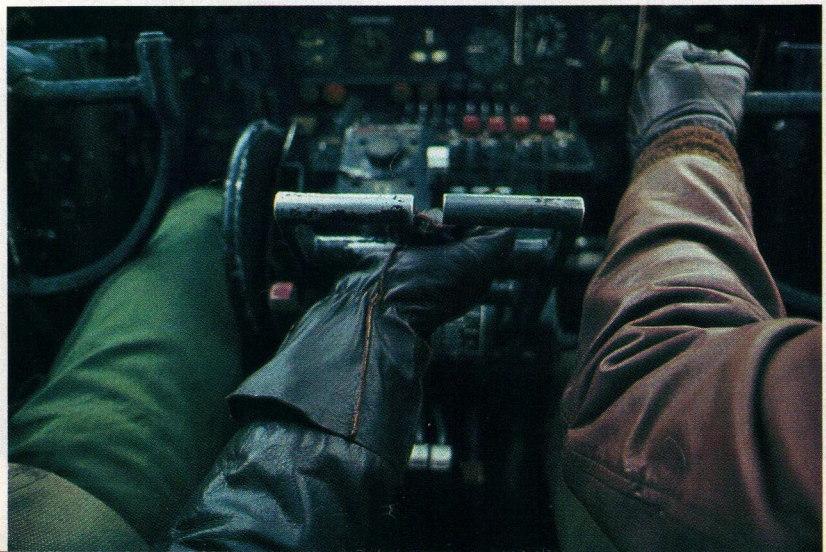
This portfolio is adapted with permission from material in *The Lady: Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress* with photographs by Dan Patterson and text by Paul Perkins (Howell Press, Charlottesville, Virginia; 64 pages, $15.95 paperback). Copyright by Dan Patterson.











The first challenge on a typical ten- to twelve-hour B-17 mission into the heart of Europe was getting the thirty-plus tons of plane, bombs, and fuel off the ground (preceding spread), and then into its assigned place in the huge formations that assembled over England. Tight formations flying at high altitudes (above) to avoid heavy ground fire and yield maximum bomb saturation and interlocking defensive firepower were the key to survival.

The nine- or ten-man combat air crew aboard a B-17 was a special group of men, welded together into a smooth-running team by pride, skill, and shared dangers. The pilot, flying in the left seat, was aircraft commander. Responsible for the safety and efficiency of the crew at all times, he was coach in a sport with mortal stakes. The copilot (left center) was the pilot's executive officer, chief understudy, and strong right hand (both figuratively and literally), frequently relieving the commander at the controls and keeping track of the engines, fuel usage, crew reports, and injuries. Two other key officers—the navigator and bombardier—occupied stations in the nose of the aircraft, just forward of the cockpit. The flight engineer (opposite) was the senior enlisted crew member and also the most knowledgeable person about the plane and its workings. During takeoff he assisted the pilots in monitoring the engines and other systems.

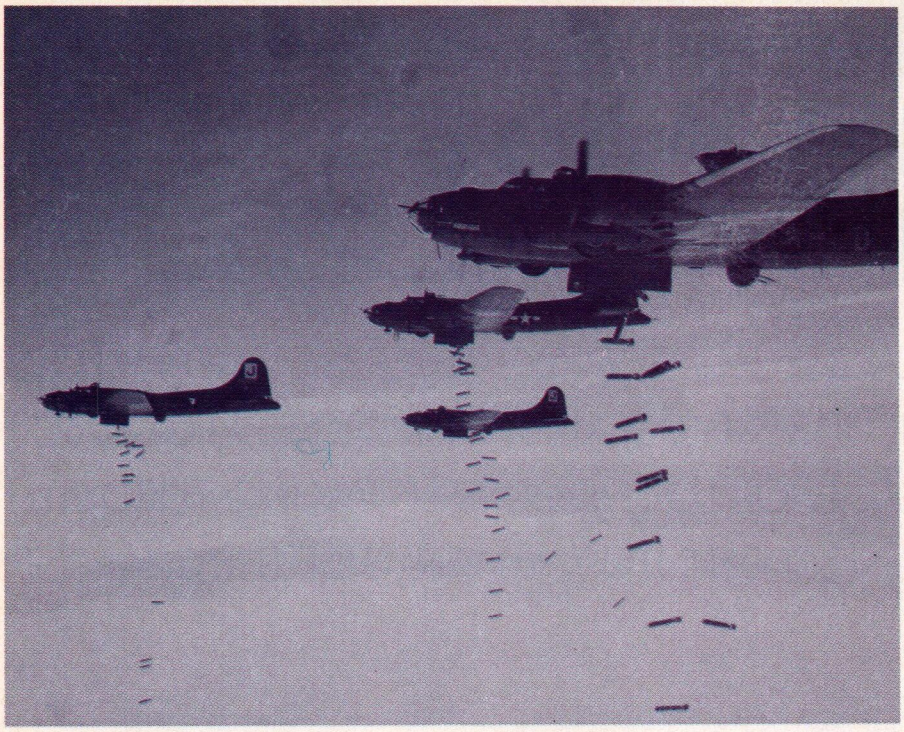
Skilled gunners for the B-17's array of .50-caliber guns were crucial for survival over enemy territory, for fighter protection was often lacking on long missions. The flight engineer doubled as a gunner, manning the electrically operated top turret (right) just behind the cockpit. He also was responsible for calling out the position of attacking fighters for the other gunners. The two waist gunners (below) had to fight the 150-m.p.h. slipstream to maneuver their 65-pound guns throughout their range of travel while leading incoming fighters and remembering not to shoot parts off their own aircraft. The tail gunner's station directly below the large rudder (opposite) afforded him a panoramic view of the air battle as it unfolded. A fourth gunner—usually a small man—curled up inside a twin-gun ball turret in the belly of the aircraft. Additional guns were located in the nose of the plane for use by the navigator and bombardier when needed.











RIGHT 390TH BOMB GROUP COLLECTION.

Accurate and effective bombing was the ultimate purpose of the B-17 and crew. The bombardier's job required close cooperation with the pilot; during the brief interval of the bomb run, he was in absolute command and controlled the aircraft either directly through the autopilot or indirectly via the Pilot Direction Indicator (PDI). His Norden bombsight (opposite) combined aircraft flight variables and bomb ballistics to arrive at a solution for the drop-point. The best bombing results were usually achieved by having a lead bombardier sight for the whole formation, with the others "toggling" their bomb loads precisely on his drop or marker (left).

With the bomb run over, the mission was half-completed; now the planes and crews had to fight their way back home—often with the added handicap of disabled engines and other damage, as well as wounded crewmen. ★

BOMBARDIER

BY WILLIAM BRICK EXACTLY EIGHT WEEKS AFTER HE AND FELLOW CREW MEMBERS OF THE "GREAT SPECKLED BIRD" POSED FOR THEIR PICTURE (BELOW), THE AUTHOR FOUND HIMSELF FALLING THROUGH SPACE OVER AUSTRIA—AND THEN INTO THE HANDS OF THE GERMANS.



COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR.

FOGGIA, ITALY—November 15, 1944. 815th Bomb Squadron Headquarters, 483rd Bomb Group. Five A.M. The small, dimly lighted intelligence building in the middle of an olive grove is jammed with bomber crews still half-dressed and fighting off sleep, battle fatigue, and the effects of last night's drinking at the officers' bar.

"Gentlemen, our target for today is Linz, Austria," announces the briefing officer. "And I hope your oxygen masks help clear up those hangovers before you get there. Bad weather prevents formation flying today, so we are sending up single bombers."

We learn that our B-17 is scheduled to be the first plane over the target.

The average age of our ten crew members is twenty years and three months; the youngest, the tail gunner, is only eighteen. This morning, as we prepare for another raid, we try not to let our minds wander back to the three previous missions, which carried us over targets in Germany, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, and the heavy losses our squadron sustained on them.

Halfway to Austria, flying at fifteen thousand feet, we encounter a violent storm. Rain and hail reduce visibility to zero. Finally, as we continue north over the Austrian Alps, the foul weather lets up and the sky turns gray with thin patches of drifting fog far below.

Then Linz comes into view—a large, grim industrial city on the Danube, showing severe damage from previous raids. I ready my bombsight, making final adjustments in the settings.

At eleven A.M. we begin the bomb run. For long seconds there is a horrifying silence amidst the drone of the engines—it is always that way while we wait for the action to begin. Then, as we have been expecting, all hell breaks loose.



UPI/BETTMANN, NEW YORK CITY.

"Flak!" scream our gunners, all together, over the intercom. Shell bursts blossom ahead of and behind the B-17, to either side, and above and below us.

"Bomb doors open," I tell the pilot . . . deathly silence again prevails within the ship. I have pinpointed the target area and superimposed the cross hairs of my Norden bombsight on the aiming point. The remainder of the run must be perfectly straight and level, without the slightest deviation, or our five-thousand-pound bomb load will fall wide of the target. No evasive action is possible—making it a piece of cake for the German antiaircraft batteries to track us all the way in.

Then comes the sickening rattle of machine-gun bullets and cannon fire hitting our ship; ignoring the flak from the antiaircraft batteries, German fighter planes zoom in so close that it seems they will ram us. Outside our windows the sky darkens as the bright orange flames of exploding flak dissolve into large, black puffs of smoke. We hear dull thuds and feel the aircraft quiver as pieces of jagged steel penetrate the wings, fuselage, and engines.

Even at the sub-zero temperature of this altitude, salty sweat pours down my face and burns my eyeballs. Cursing and praying, I am gripped by the brand of helpless fear that fliers experience during every bomb run. I feel the terror in my hands (although they somehow continue to do their work), in my stomach, even in my feet. Long after returning from the mission, its effects will remain etched indelibly on my face.

"Bombs away!" I call to the pilot. "Get the hell out of here, fast!" We dive to gain speed and begin evasive maneuvers as we turn away from the target.

Now we can check the battle damage. The crew is mostly OK, but the radar equipment is out . . . useless to help navigate us home through the storm. Number one engine is dead . . . the fuel line to number three has been hit, but the engine is still responding . . . and smoke is coming from somewhere. Then comes the kicker: the bomb-bay doors won't close—and the drag they create is exerting a strain on the remaining engines. A five-hundred-pound bomb, its nose dangling outside the fuselage, is hung up on the rack. The bomb is armed and ready to explode on impact; as long as it remains in the plane, any landing is impossible.

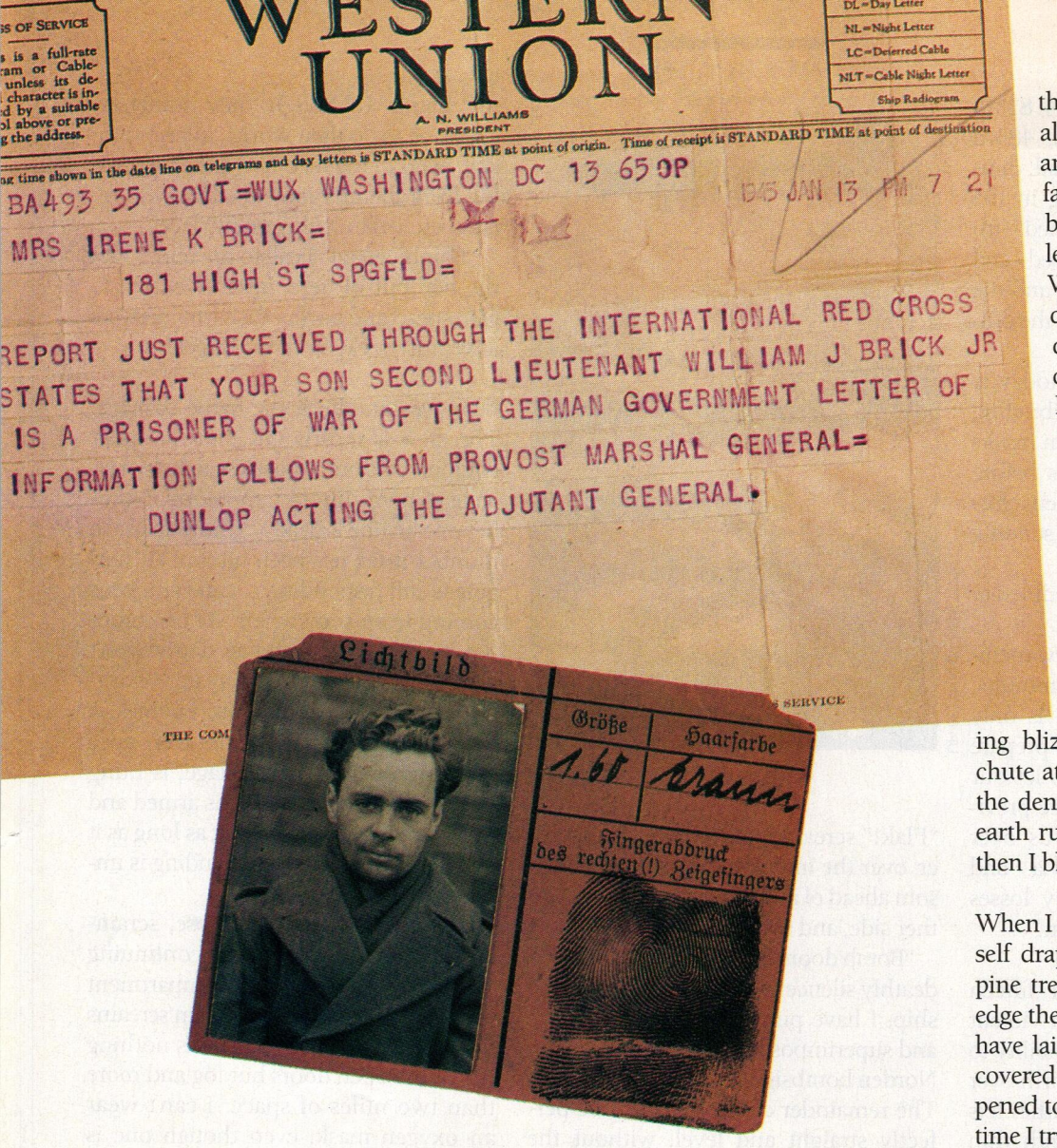
I climb back from the nose, scrambling under the cockpit and continuing aft through the engineer's compartment to the bomb bay. The slipstream screams by with gale force, and there is nothing below the open doors but fog and more than two miles of space. I can't wear an oxygen mask, even though one is needed at this altitude, because it would interfere with my work.

Kneeling precariously on the eight-inch-wide catwalk that spans the compartment, I pry at the bomb with a long steel bar. Several times I have to be dragged back by the flight engineer for draughts of oxygen. Finally the bomb breaks loose with a terrific jolt; and after receiving more oxygen, and the help of other crew members, I scramble back to the nose and close the bomb-bay doors.

The crew realizes that the situation is still desperate, but we have evaded disaster before; the self-confidence of highly trained men is a great factor in survival. We are not cowards (fear and terror under fire are quite normal), but we aren't heroes either—just being here because we have to.

Continuing south toward Italy, we reenter the storm, and suddenly the buffeting becomes too much for our straining engines. Hitting a space of turbulent

The author (far left, front row on opposite page) poses with other crewmen in front of their B-17 bomber after ferrying it to North Africa in September 1944. The fliers' association with this particular aircraft was brief: almost immediately after they arrived overseas, more senior members of the squadron appropriated the recently manufactured plane, relegating the newcomers to whatever battle-weary B-17s were available.



BOTH ITEMS COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR.

air, the plane careens into a terrifying dive and plummets several thousand feet before the pilot and copilot regain control. From here on, precise navigation seems out of the question; our best efforts can only keep us in the air. . . .

The engines don't have enough power now to lift us over the mountains that separate us from Italy. The remaining choices are not encouraging: we can land at a Swiss airfield and be interned for the rest of the war; take our chances with the Russians beyond their illusive battle line; or bail out over Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia (our radar officer was shot down there a few weeks before and got back aided by Marshal Tito's partisan fighters). We point our damaged aircraft blindly east toward Yugo.

Suddenly flak is hitting us again! We have blundered over another concentration of antiaircraft batteries. This time all of the engines are knocked out. "Bail out!" the pilot screams over the intercom. We've been half-expecting this, but the reality of having to abandon our aircraft over enemy territory still comes as a terrible shock. This is it! The navigator and I look each other in the eye and shake hands in farewell.

I kick open the nose hatch, remove the bombsight from its mounting, and heave it out. Then I make my way back toward the waist hatch. The inside of the ship looks like an empty shell. Kneeling at the open door, and leaning forward an inch at a time, I finally fall out.

The last I see of the plane as I tumble through the air is the flash of metal passing overhead, with smoke and flame trailing behind. Now, falling through space, I gradually become aware of the awful silence of complete nothingness. When I pull the red ripcord handle, nothing happens—the chute doesn't open! I tear the pack's cover flaps apart with my bare hands until I come to the silk, then pay it out slowly into the slipstream.

My free-fall ends abruptly when the canopy opens—it is like being in the front seat of a car when it hits a cement wall. Boots, helmet, everything loose go flying off without me.

The ride down is rough: wind and snow from the raging blizzard threaten to collapse my chute at any moment. At last, through the dense fog I catch a glimpse of the earth rushing up to meet me . . . and then I black out.

When I regain consciousness, I find myself draped over the stump of a dead pine tree: when my back hit its sharp edge the impact knocked me out. I must have lain here for some time, for I am covered with snow. Something has happened to the nerves in my left leg; every time I try to stand up, the leg trembles so violently that I fall back down again. It is freezing cold, and I no longer have my helmet, flying boots, or gloves. But I am alive.

After cutting strips of fabric from my parachute with a pocket knife, I wrap the ragged pieces around my feet, head, and hands, and then begin crawling through the deep snow. I am on a steep mountainside. At first I try working my way uphill in hopes of finding a viewpoint and getting my bearings, but I keep slipping back until I am exhausted. Finally I give up and turn downhill.

Gradually I am able to walk on my leg, but it is difficult and painfully slow because the snow is above my knees. Every time I stop to rest, the cold becomes so intense that I am frightened into continuing.

I come across what seems at first to be a path, but I soon realize that it is a frozen stream bed. I follow this, hoping that it will lead somewhere; my greatest

Nearly two months after William Brick was shot down over Austria, his family finally received word that he was alive and a captive of the Germans (top). Brick still retains his prisoner-of-war identification card (above).

Glimpses into the world that the author and his fellow prisoners of war inhabited: recently shot-down fliers await interrogation by a German officer (top); prisoners evacuated from Stalag Luft III just ahead of the advancing Russians march through winter snows toward camps deeper in Germany (center); and on their day of liberation—April 29, 1945—some of the 100,000-plus inhabitants of Stalag VII A in Moosberg, Bavaria swarm over their compound fence (bottom).







BOTTOM TO TOP: COWLES HISTORY GROUP; U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY MUSEUM; UPI/BETTMANN, NEW YORK CITY.

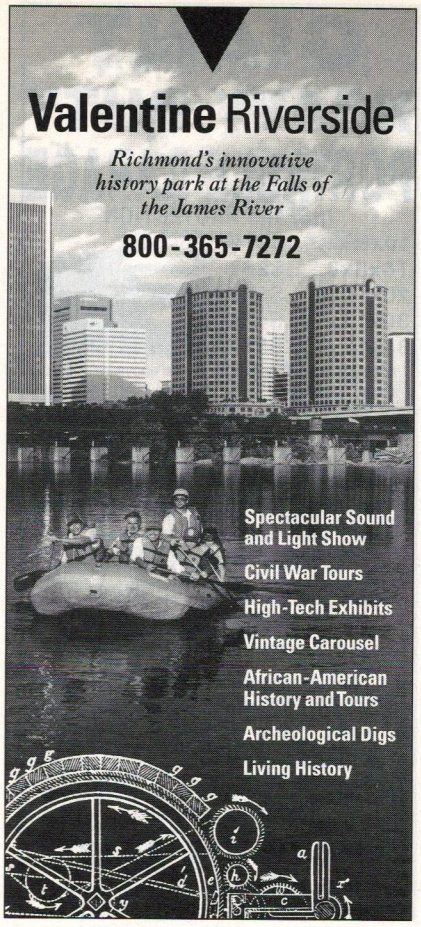
fear is that when I get to the end of the downhill slope the only way forward will lead uphill again—and I know that I won't be able to make it.

After I have stumbled along for what seem to be endless hours, night descends. I figure that at last I've had it; then I encounter a rail fence . . . a little farther on I find a wooden cabin, with the smell of smoke drifting from the chimney. I hide on the edge of the forest, observing it, until, completely numb from the cold, I am forced to make a move. Starting toward the door, I pass out.

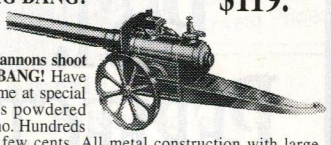
I come to on the floor of the cabin, stiff as a board, lying in front of a fireplace. A young boy and an old lady with a black shawl wrapped around her head are standing over me. They help me to sit up, then give me a cup of something hot to drink. The woman dresses the boy and sends him out the door; later he returns with a Frenchman who is wearing a faded beret. The man is a member of a German forced-labor camp—maybe he will try to contact the Underground to help me escape. But just as we are preparing to leave, the front and back doors are kicked in at the same time by heavy boots. Two storm troopers have me covered with burp guns.

Later that night I am reunited with five other members of our crew at a small railroad station.* Guards escort us onto a train pulled by an old steam locomotive, and we chug off to a large Austrian city. There the six of us are crowded into a stone dungeon sealed by an ancient iron door and are given some stale dark bread and water.

*Exactly how many of our ten-man crew survived the loss of our aircraft and subsequent captivity I don't know. After the war ended, a sister of one of the gunners contacted me, seeking information about her brother—he never got back.



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continued from page 36

save his family—wife, children, mother, etc.—would cause him to leave his post. Not in this century, at least, has a single American soldier been faced with the choice. We have always fought away from our own soil and our own families."

"We saw the family syndrome reassert itself time and again during the final days," Smith said. "Yet we never saw the lack of a will to fight. As the lines around Saigon tightened there was plenty of evidence of hard and skillful fighting . . . I know of no case where a member of a regular unit of the South failed to fight when his family was safe."

At Hue the RVNAF 1st Infantry Division fell prey to the family syndrome, then the 2nd Infantry Division at Da Nang, followed by the 3rd Infantry Division south and west of the city. Da Nang descended into anarchy as both civilians and armed mobs of South Vietnamese soldiers fought for space on evacuation boats and aircraft. As emotion overtook reason, pandemonium erupted. The mobs had literally wrested control of the city from all official authority. The last Americans out of Da Nang, along with the RVNAF military hierarchy, escaped over the beach onto Vietnamese Navy craft. As General Smith noted, "the experience was shattering to all who participated." It was one that would haunt the subsequent evacuation of Saigon.

Meanwhile, what was left of the forces withdrawing from Pleiku and Kontum, still under attack by the pursuing 320th NVA Division, emerged at Tuy Hoa, south of Qui Nhon. The NVA had finally succeeded in doing what the Americans had prevented them from accomplishing ten years earlier. They had cut South Vietnam in half.

As the debacle continued to unfold, the MR II commander, Major General Phu (who would later commit suicide in disgrace), deserted his headquarters at Nha Trang and fled to Saigon. Nha Trang did not so much fall to the enemy as it was abandoned by its erstwhile defenders.

A counterpoint to Nha Trang, however, was the stand of the RVNAF 18th Infantry Division at Xuan Loc, the capital of Long Khanh province, forty miles northeast of Saigon. On March 17, Xuan Loc came under attack by the NVA 6th and 7th Divisions. These attacks were repulsed by the South Vietnamese 18th Infantry Division defenders, but on April 9, reinforced by the NVA 341st Division, the battle resumed. Even though the NVA was supported by a four-thousand-round artillery bombardment and T-54 medium tanks, the attack once again failed.

On April 15, the NVA reinforced yet again with their 325th Division and began bringing their 10th and 304th Divisions into position. Two days later, faced with overwhelming odds, the 18th Division was forced to give ground. But they had virtually destroyed three NVA divisions in the process.

"An uneasy quiet settled over the battlefield," notes the official history, "while the enemy made plans, conducted reconnaissance, and issued orders for the final drive. Sixteen NVA divisions were now in Military Region III and poised for a three-pronged attack on Saigon."

Meanwhile, those of us in the U.S. Mission in Saigon (i.e., the Embassy staff, the fifty military members of the Defense Attaché Office (DAO), and the six remaining members of the U.S. Delegation, Four Party Joint Military Team—Colonel John H. Madison, Jr., its chief; myself, the head of the Negotiations Division; my deputy, Captain Stuart A. Herrington; Master Sergeant William Herron; Marine Sergeant Ernest Pace; and our interpreter, Specialist 7 Garrett "Bill" Bell) were busy with the fixed-wing evacuation of U.S. civilians and their families, as well as Vietnamese civilians whose past cooperation with the United States had put their lives in danger.*

The U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam, Graham Martin, had placed his defense attaché, General Smith, in charge of the evacuation. From his headquarters at the old MACV (Military Assistance Command Vietnam) compound at Tan Son Nhut airbase in the suburbs of Saigon, Smith organized the withdrawal.

One of the first evacuation flights was that of a U.S. Air Force (USAF) C-5A transport on April 4. Dubbed "Operation Baby Lift," it involved some 250 orphans, escorted by thirty-seven American women, mostly secretaries and staff personnel from the U.S. mission. Soon after departure, the transport suffered a

*The Four Party Joint Military Team (FPJMT) had been set up by the Paris Accords to negotiate on the POW/MIA issue.

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Louisbourg 1995

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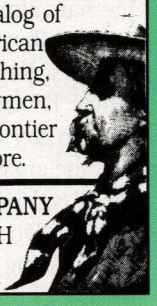
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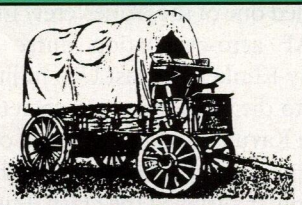
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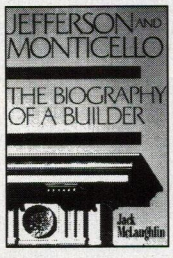
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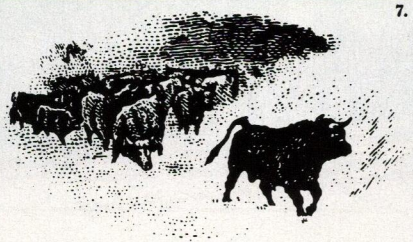


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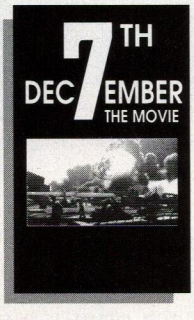
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massive structural failure and, while attempting to return to Tan Son Nhut, crashed short of the runway.

The many casualties in this tragedy included one of the plane's crew members, USAF aero-evacuation nurse Captain Mary Klinker, the last U.S. military officer to die in the war; my secretary, Barbara Kavulia; and the wife and one child of Specialist Bell. Miraculously his other daughter survived the crash. But terrible as that incident was, the airlift continued apace. From April 6 to April 28 some 44,920 evacuees were processed through the DAO, primarily by USAF C-130 and C-141 cargo aircraft.

On April 29 the NVA began a rocket and artillery attack on Tan Son Nhut that brought the fixed-wing evacuation to a close. Killed in the attack were two U.S. Marine security guards, Lance Corporal Darwin Judge and Corporal Charles McMahon, Jr.—the last American servicemen to die in action in the war.

Meanwhile, on April 25—accompanied by Specialist Bell, who had returned to Vietnam of his own volition after escorting his surviving daughter to his parent's home in the United States—I made a trip to Hanoi on a USAF C-130 to receive the North Vietnamese terms for the U.S. withdrawal. (The members of the U.S. Delegation, Four Party Joint Military Team were the only Americans to then have open diplomatic contact with the North Vietnamese. Regular FPJMT liaison flights to Hanoi had been conducted since 1973.)

It was a far cry from my first tour in Vietnam almost a decade earlier as operations officer of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment in the U.S. 1st Infantry Division. For one thing, I now was on my own. "Damned if I know," was the answer I received when I asked the U.S. Embassy what I should do in Hanoi: "Do the best you can." For another, being in the enemies' capital on the eve of their victory was a surreal experience—made even more uncomfortable by their attempts to put me at ease.

"You have done more than enough . . . more than enough for the RVN [Republic of Vietnam]," said NVA Major Huyen, head of the official reception committee in Hanoi, "and you have no reason to feel badly." He then went on to give me the North Vietnamese terms for the U.S. withdrawal from Saigon.

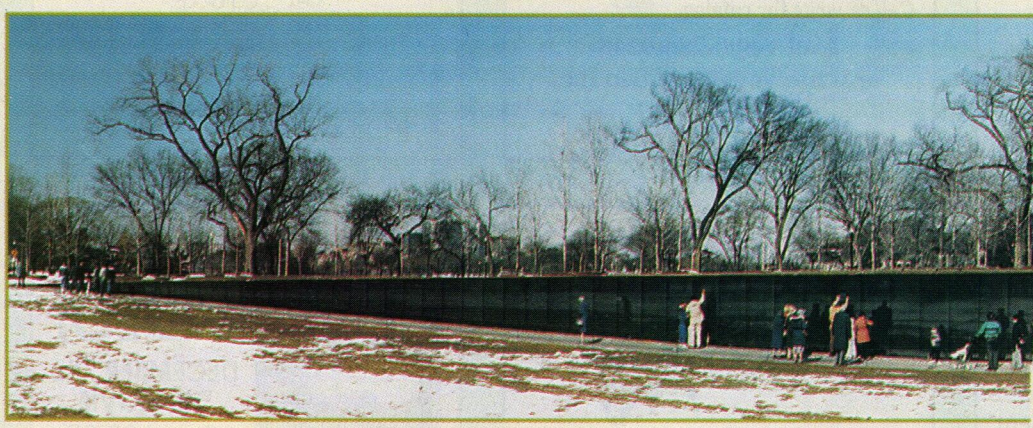
"The U.S. Delegation, FPJMT *must* stay," he said, "to accomplish its humanitarian tasks." As usual he linked Article 8b of the Paris Accords relating to the MIA issue to Article 21 dealing with reparation aid. "The DAO *must* go," he said, "It is only the military advisors that must go."

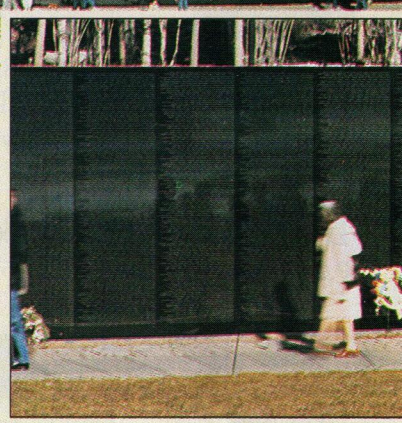
"The Embassy must work out its own future," Major Huyen continued, going to great pains to make the point that there was no reason friendly relations could not be established between the U.S. and North Vietnam.

On the return flight to Saigon those terms were reiterated by Colonel Tu, head of the FPJMT's North Vietnamese Delegation. Earlier I had said to him, "You know you never beat us on the battlefield!" His reply was a short lesson in strategy. "That may be true," he said, "but it is also irrelevant."

On April 29—fully prepared to stay in-country after Saigon's fall—our six-man

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FPJMT contingent moved from our headquarters in the DAO compound to the U.S. Embassy downtown. We arrived just in time to find that Secretary Kissinger, reportedly in a pique over being "betrayed" by Le Duan, had ordered all U.S. personnel, including the FPJMT, out of Vietnam.

While the evacuation plan had called for an Air America helilift of some one hundred Embassy personnel from the roof to the main evacuation point at the DAO compound at Tan Son Nhut, we found some three thousand American, third-country, and Vietnamese evacuees jammed within the Embassy walls. Near-chaos reigned, and Colonel Madison volunteered the services of his team to maintain order and organize the evacuation while the Marine guards manned the perimeter to keep out thousands of additional frantic Vietnamese.

The first order of business was to calm the evacuees, for the specter of the debacle at Da Nang where the mobs made evacuation impossible was ever-present. Thanks to Captain Herrington, Sergeants Herron and Pace, and Specialist Bell, all of whom spoke Vietnamese, the crowd was assured they would not be abandoned. With the help of Tom Stebbins, a missionary who spoke fluent Vietnamese, I too worked at calming the evacuees.

The main evacuation at the DAO compound began after initial delays at about 4:00 P.M. on April 29th as Marine CH-46 *Sea Knight* and CH-53 *Sea Stallion* helicopters started moving evacuees to ships of the U.S. fleet offshore. By 8:00 P.M. the DAO evacuation was complete, and at 12:12 A.M. on the 30th, the last of the Marine security force departed and the old MACV headquarters was destroyed by preset demolition charges.

Meanwhile the Embassy evacuation, although sporadic, continued apace. By 4:20 A.M. on April 30, only 460 evacuees remained within the Embassy walls. Six CH-53 helilifts would have completed the operation. But that was not to be. Because of a breakdown in communications, fleet commanders thought they were dealing with a bottomless pit and recommended that the evacuation be terminated. By order of President Ford, Ambassador Martin and his staff left at 4:45 A.M. and our FPJMT personnel at 5:30 A.M.

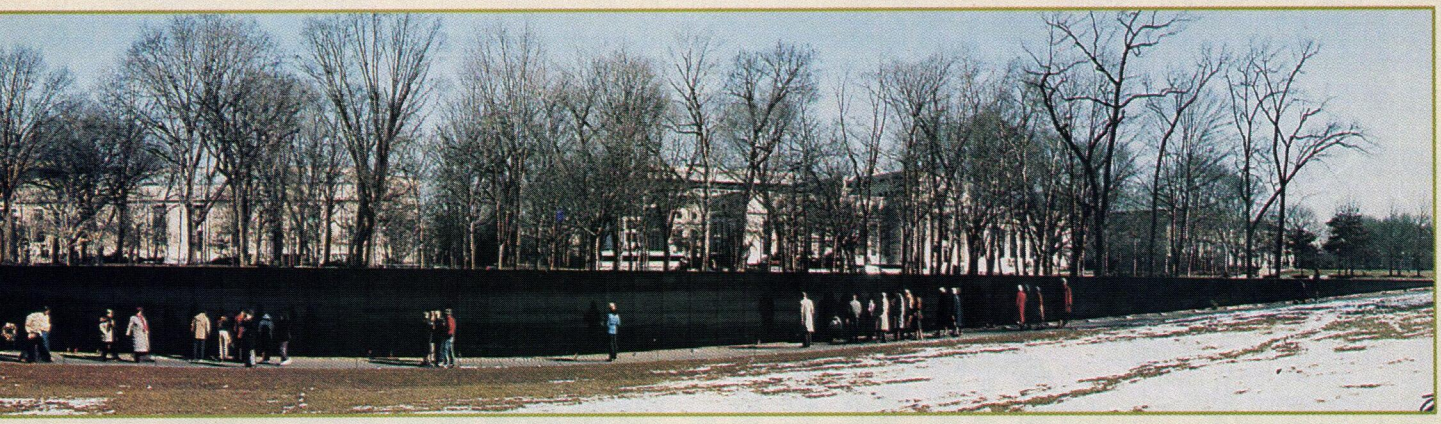
The 420 evacuees to whom we had given our solemn word, now realizing they had been abandoned, began pressing at the Marine guards as they withdrew into the Embassy. But it was all over.

The evacuation of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon had turned out to be the Vietnam War writ small. Our intentions were good, but the execution was fatally flawed. For those of us who were there, it was a shameful day to be an American. ★

A combat veteran of both the Korean and Vietnam wars, Colonel Summers is the editor of Vietnam magazine. His books On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War *(Presidio, 1982) and* Vietnam War Almanac *(Facts on File, 1985) are standard teaching and reference texts on the war. A third book,* Atlas of the Vietnam War, *is forthcoming from Houghton Mifflin later this year.*

Recommended additional reading: One of the best accounts of the Saigon evacuation is Stuart A. Herrington's *Peace With Honor?* (Presidio, 1983). For the final days, Arnold Isaac's *Without Honor* (Johns Hopkins University, 1983) is recommended, as is David Butler's *The Fall of Saigon* (Simon & Schuster, 1985).

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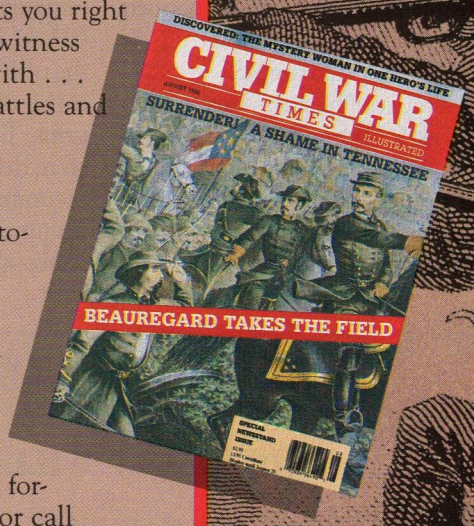
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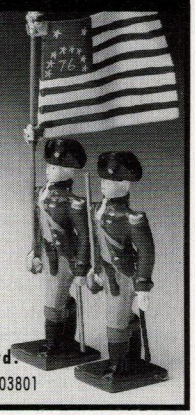
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continued from page 47

But disaster lurked behind those high salaries. As one old cowboy told me at the time, it was now costing a studio $50 a day to put an empty horse on a set with a wrangler. For 'straight riding' or driving a six-up team, cowboys earned $33.50 a day. "Mark my words," the cowboy thundered, "the Guild is goin' to price us out of business!" Not long after that, any man who could drive six-up could take home a whopping $76 a day.

In the 1960s, seeking spectacular scenery for their popular sophisticated dramas and "cast of thousands" epics, studios began filming abroad—and in doing so they struck back at the Guild. By shooting these "runaway productions" in Italy and Spain, and hiring locals for significantly less pay, they avoided the spiraling cost of extras at home. Spanish cavalrymen were engaged to ride and perform dangerous saddle falls for next to nothing, and when Cecile B. DeMille filmed his *Ten Commandments* in the Holy Land, hosts of Israelis were happy to build pyramids and cross burning sands for only *fifty cents a day*!

For decades the leading stars at major studios had worked under long-term contracts and been rotated handily from film to film around their home lots. So, too, could carpenters and electricians who worked year 'round. A new picture could be ready with its stars, director, cameraman, and entire cast and crew hired and ready to roll in a matter of days. Whatever its shortcomings, the Studio System had been as dependable as "Big Ben."

But throughout the 1970s that intricately-built mechanism gradually began coming apart. From top to bottom the manpower that once ran studios the size of small cities was jettisoned, and major contract stars were turned out of their studios to fend for themselves. Priceless wardrobe and prop departments were dismantled, their rare contents auctioned off to the highest bidders. Pioneer landmark studios were gutted, razed, and the ground beneath them sold as gilt-edged real estate. The days when every studio routinely turned out fifty feature films a year and the System hummed along like a well-oiled Rolls Royce engine were gone forever.

A freewheeling, far costlier industry emerged from the wreckage. Today, independent productions are the order of the day. Television dramas and commercials form an integral part of the new Hollywood.

Through it all, extras survived—most as dazzled by fame as their predecessors had been. But today their numbers are a mere fraction of those who worked during the movies' Golden Age. Today many still feel called to be extras, but few are chosen.*

Of the old order, Central Casting remains, but new casting agencies also abound. Their flyers, listing tear-off phone numbers to call, are seen tacked to telephone poles all over Hollywood, bannering such large-type lures as "WORK IN THE MOVIES!" Some charge commissions equal to the first day's salary, but there is no dearth of takers. As in early Hollywood, once again anyone in town can become an extra, and it seems that nearly everyone wants to be one.

However much movie-making may have changed, today's career extras still regard Hollywood as the center of the universe, and like Miss Eunice, believe that working as an extra is the dream-life they were born to live. Just as in the early days of film, when extras leave the ranks for loftier pursuits, fellow extras pity them for their grave misfortune.

For years after I left the industry to pursue a writing career, my extra friends always greeted me with a heartfelt, "You mean you're still *'between pictures*!'" And then in the next breath they handed out the true believer's time-honored advice, "Why don't you give Central a call?" ★

Former child film star and vaudeville performer Diana Serra Cary [see "Editor's Desk on page 4] is the author of two nonfiction books on early motion-picture history, The Hollywood Posse *(Houghton Mifflin, 1975) and* Hollywood's Children *(Houghton Mifflin, 1979). She has recently completed her autobiography.*

*Directors recently made a deal with the Screen Extras' Guild stipulating that the first thirty-five people hired for any crowd scene *must* be members of the SEG. Their daily wage would range from $99 to $105. Any others being hired would have to be *non*-union extras earning only half that much. In a subsequent move the SEG was absorbed back into the Screeen Actors' Guild—a change that automatically cut union extras' wages by one third. Directors then re-negotiated the required thirty-five Guild members on each set down to only ten!

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UNLOCKING A PHOTOGRAPH'S SECRETS

More than a half-century after the Japanese Navy's December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, a dramatic photograph of the action has apparently yielded surprising new information. The picture below, taken by a crewman aboard one of the first torpedo planes over the harbor, shows "Battleship Row" moments after Japanese torpedoes began to strike their targets. If the conclusions of analysts at a Virginia high-technology imaging firm are correct, the picture is a "time capsule" in the truest sense of the word—for decades preserving information that has only now become accessible through computer technology.

Their findings have to do with the Japanese "Special Attack Unit"—five two-man midget submarines launched from much larger mother craft south of Oahu early on the morning of December 7. Two of the eighty-foot "Type-A" submarines were sunk by U.S. warships near the harbor entrance, while a third, wandering off-course, washed ashore at the eastern end of the island. A fourth minisub succeeded in fully entering Pearl Harbor but was rammed and depth-charged by an American destroyer. The fifth submarine has long been unaccounted for—and historians have maintained that none of the boats succeeded in making a valid attack.

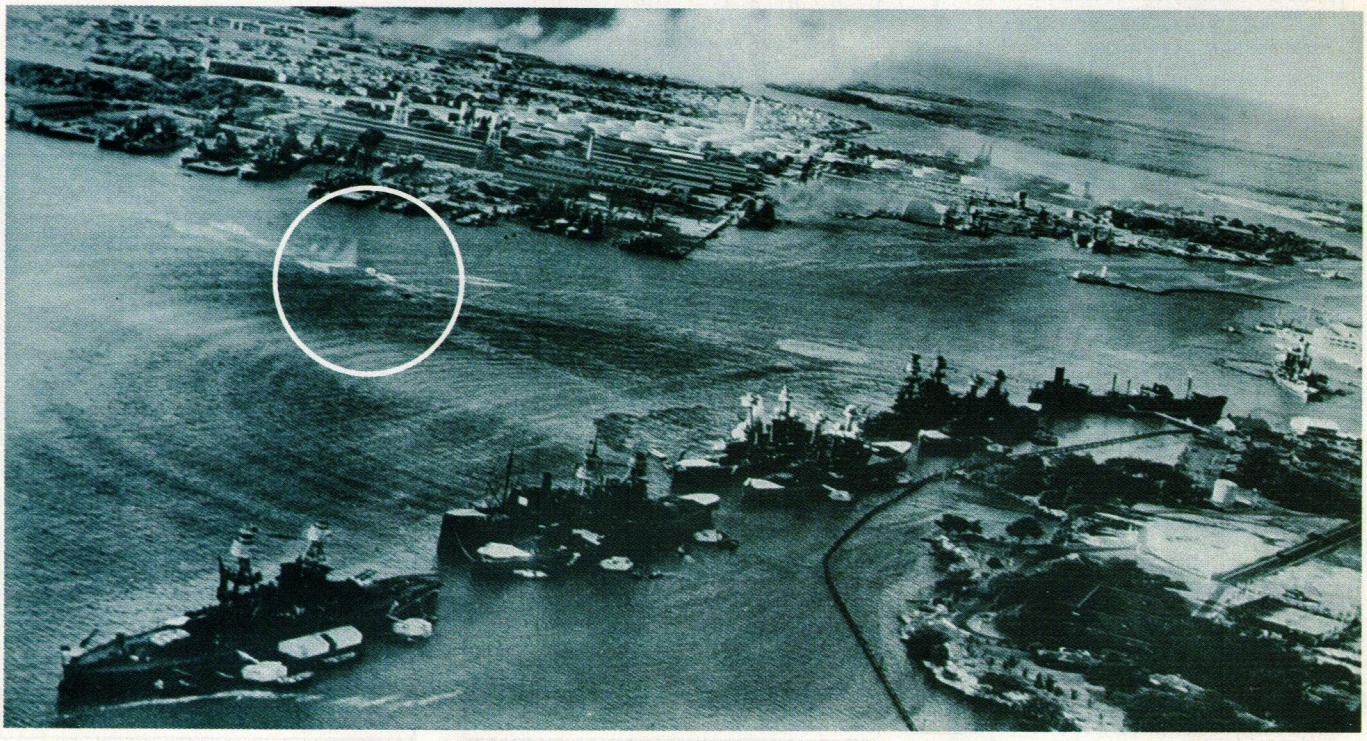
In 1993 National Park Service historian Daniel Martinez asked Autometric, Inc. of Alexandria, Virginia to analyze the image—paying particular attention to unusual features in the left-central portion of the photo (circled area below).

Technicians at the image-processing firm obtained a duplicate negative of the picture from the Naval Historical Center; converted the image to digital form; and electronically enhanced it. Analysis and careful measurements of a small rectangular object appearing in the enhanced image have led Autometric interpreters to classify it as the conning tower of a Type-A midget submarine.* They further identify several spray patterns as "rooster tails" caused by shock waves from torpedo explosions passing over the hull of the submarine. The analysts have also specifically located six torpedo tracks leading to U.S. warships —but only four air-drop splash-points. The two remaining wakes—one leading to the battleship *Oklahoma* and the other to the *West Virginia*—emanate from the location of the supposed submarine.

Autometric's analysis, therefore, points toward the existence of a previously undetected penetration of Pearl Harbor by a Type-A submarine—plus a successful torpedo attack by that craft against two of the American battleships.

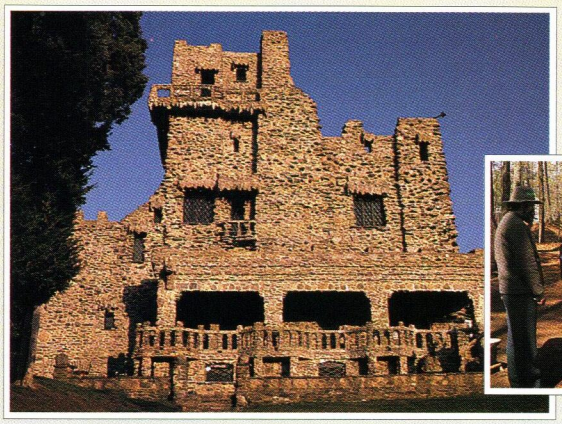
National Park historians note the existence of a silt mound on the harbor floor in the same area where the supposed submarine appears. Future investigations at that site—which possibly marks the grave of the fifth submarine—have the potential of confirming that one of the boats did actually succeed in its mission. ★

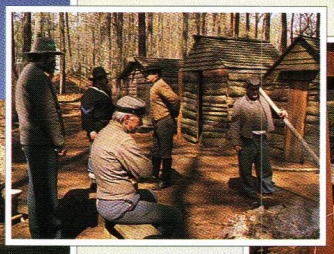
*A 1992 book—*Advance Force Pearl Harbor*—by Burl Burlinggame first advanced the premise that a minisub had been photographed in Pearl Harbor.

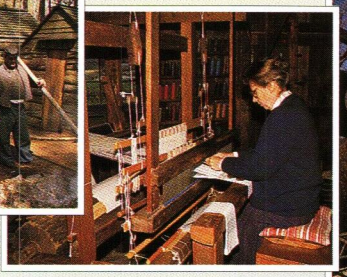


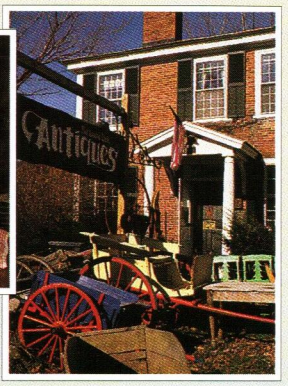
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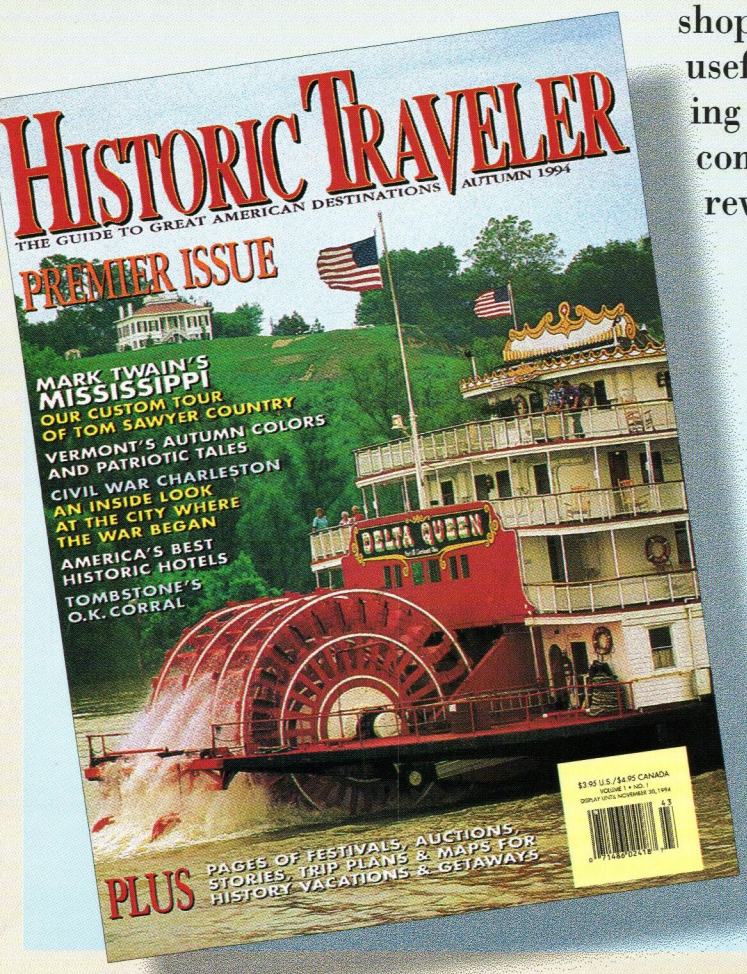


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